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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXIX. No. 726. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1945 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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PROFITS, PRIESTS AND KINGS

MR. CHURCHILL may be tiring of his role as king-maker. Propping the Royal House of Savoy has led to unnecessary trouble with the United States. Manœuvring for King George of the Hellenes proved futile; the wrong horse had to be changed in mid-stream. Chivalrously sponsoring King Peter of Yugoslavia has produced an absurd situation which would try the patience of a more equable man than the Prime Minister. To the public it becomes increasingly clear that these efforts are misguided. Give these monarchs a hint of British support and they at once behave like Stuart kings, who lost their heads or their thrones because they would not admit the rights of democracy and could always justify every intrigue and act of double dealing by a lingering belief in their own Divine Right. Even when they have reached the point of agreeing to a democratic constitutional solution, there is always a relative to remind them of the classical admonition: "George, be a King."

Some such prompting seems to explain the latest manœuvres of King Peter of Yugoslavia, whose mother-in-law, herself a Greek princess, has never been willing for either the House of Karageorgivitch or Holstein to accept the limitations of constitutional monarchy. King Peter himself is interested in racing motor cars and aeroplanes, and there seems no reason why, left to himself, he should not live a harmless existence, indulging in these twentieth-century hobbies. Instead, he has been persuaded by his relatives, or entourage, or perhaps by business people here with large interests in Yugoslavia, to place himself in a position from which he can scarcely emerge with credit. When he appeared finally to have agreed to a Regency and to have accepted Marshal Tito's Government, he surprised everyone by taking the unprecedented step of summoning a press conference, without consulting his own Ministers; and, when this conference was vetoed, he issued to newspapers on his own initiative the statement that he had been prevented from giving them in person. The Foreign Office went so far as to express "the utmost surprise and regret" at this communiqué, in which the King objected to the Regents and adopted the impracticable position of denying legislative authority to the *de facto* Government which is still fighting a desperate war against the Germans. So far from reality was the King's message that it suggested an all-party Government without even excluding collaborationists.

The theoretical argument between monarchists and republicans is no longer important. The issue only arises because it is under the shadow of these thrones that there lurk corrupting and stultifying influences which exploit poverty and rely on mediæval ignorance. The choice in these countries is between a difficult but creative future and a return to a wretched if picturesque past. The new forces will often be crude and violent, but they aim at popular education and emancipation, at the development of national resources and their use for the common benefit. The alternative is the perpetuation of conditions that we proverbially describe as Balkan, until they end in further bloodshed or civil war. In Rome, for instance, the return of the old order means the black hand of clericalism and the degradation of Italy as a country of abject poverty, tolerable only to tourists for its museum value. In Yugoslavia the old order means the abortion of a popular revolution arising out of the heroic struggle against the Germans. We are all so mealy-mouthed in these days that we seldom state the blunt truth that those who support King Peter (and sometimes still Mihailovitch) are in many cases people who had business interests in Yugoslavia before the war; that King Alexander was the richest man in Yugoslavia with a financial finger in every national and international pie in the country, and that important minority and other foreign interests regard the ruling Serbian group as the guarantee of their future dividends. Tito's programme expressly recognises the rights of foreign investors in Yugoslavia, but clearly under his Government foreign interests would not be entitled either to control the policy of the country or have so free a hand in making profits out of the resources or labour of Yugoslavia.

It should not be too soon to expect Mr. Churchill to recognise that, as the *Times* said in commenting on King Peter's communiqué, "here as elsewhere in liberated Europe any provisional authority, which is to be effective must be built up round the hard core of the resistance movements." The alternative is to back a dictatorship with foreign bayonets. In the case of Greece Mr. Eden has declared in the most explicit terms that we are prepared to do no such thing, and Mr. Churchill now supports the conception of free elections and an amnesty. If that is indeed British policy, as we are sure it is the policy desired by the British, Mr. Churchill will have to reverse a good many wheels in Athens. General Plastiras, relying on British support, dwells on the punishment of his opponents and emphatically rejects the British idea of an amnesty. He talks glibly of extirpating E.L.A.S. throughout Greece in a few weeks, and it is perhaps significant that the notorious Colonel Zervas was among those whom the supporters of Plastiras cheered in the demonstrations in Athens. Like the Athenian population, we rejoice that the street fighting is over; we add that we hope Britain will not supply General Plastiras with arms for carrying his vendetta into the mountains. If Mr. Churchill is indeed to be as good as his word, he must also call a halt to the propaganda that still pours out in incompetent profusion from Mr. Leeper's office in Athens. The numerous trade unionists who are supposed to have welcomed the defeat of E.L.A.S. are shadowy, if not bogus figures. They represent, if they represent anyone, the fake trade unions set up under the Metaxas dictatorship. None of their names are known to trade unions with international affiliations in this country, and the most conspicuous of them appear to come from British and American oil companies—though there is some ambiguity in the Athenian statements about whether the oil concerned is petrol or olive oil. Further it becomes increasingly dubious whether the much-heralded split really occurred in E.A.M. In any case parties which are said to have denounced their allegiance to E.A.M. are now demanding that Communists should be included in the Greek Government. Most important of all, an honest statement should be made about hostages; the probability is that E.L.A.S. has about one-tenth

of the number suggested—4,000 may be near the mark—and we are entitled at the same time to know how many E.L.A.S. hostages the British hold in camps in Egypt and the Middle East. Their long detention is one of the causes of E.L.A.S. bitterness, and there may be the basis of a fair exchange. All these are questions that can be usefully the subject of inquiry in Athens by the trade union delegation which is leaving forthwith for Greece. One condition is essential if such a delegation is to be of any value. Apparently only one E.A.M. leader now remains in Athens, and American correspondents in Greece have issued an impressive protest against a ban which prohibits interviews with any member of E.A.M. Clearly the first condition made by any delegation must be that it discusses the situation with E.A.M. and especially with Kalimiros, Sir Walter Citrine's opposite number in Greek Trade Unionism.

Senator Vandenberg's Move

When Mr. Roosevelt criticised the Opposition for "perfectionism" in its attitude to the future settlement of Europe, what he had in mind was chiefly its obstinate refusal to accept Russia's plans for the Baltic States and Poland. By way of constructive response to this criticism, Senator Vandenberg, who used to be ranked as a Conservative with isolationist leanings, has made an interesting and helpful proposal. He perceives that Russia's claims are dictated by her anxiety over her future safety and in particular by her fear that she may be left ten or twenty years hence to face a rearmed Germany alone. He reckons, therefore, that the best way to reassure her would be to make the working of the Dumbarton Oaks Security Scheme automatic in its certainty. What he suggests is that the President of the U.S.A. shall be entrusted by Resolution with the right to take armed action on his own initiative, without consulting Congress, for the purpose of enforcing the permanent disarmament of Germany and Japan. This reasoning follows the precedent of 1919, when Wilson and Lloyd George induced Clemenceau to drop his demand for the Rhine frontier in return for a joint Anglo-American guarantee to France. It may be that Senator Vandenberg's suggestion would go some way to reassure Stalin, for it does prove that even conservative America is at present in earnest over the permanent disarmament of Germany. It certainly removes one possible risk—that a hostile Senate might thwart a well-meaning President. But it does nothing to banish the still graver fear that some years hence the President of the day might not choose to exercise his right to act. None the less, the suggestion sprang from a sound calculation. It is fear much more than ambition or greed or vengeance that is likely to drive us into a bad settlement.

Luzon Landing

The slight resistance offered by enemy ground forces to General MacArthur's landings in the Lingayen Gulf suggests that the Japanese probably expected the American invasion of Luzon to begin farther south, nearer Manila. The U.S. commander profited by the supremacy established by Admiral Nimitz in Philippine waters; and his seizure of the islands of Mindoro and Marinduque, due south of the capital, may have helped to mislead the enemy as to his intentions. Already an American bridgehead has been established, 45 miles wide and over 30 miles deep; and by this time sufficient forces have presumably been disembarked to enable General MacArthur to begin an offensive astride the two good roads and the railways which lead from the Lingayen Gulf to Manila. The Japanese strength in Luzon is believed to be considerable; Manila will not be won without a battle, and it would be optimistic to assume that Luzon can be completely cleared before April or May. But the enterprise has begun well, and in view of General MacArthur's ability to secure reinforcements to an extent much greater than his opponents, there should be no doubt as to the ultimate issue. Already the lane between the East China and South China Seas is being rendered precarious for Japanese shipping. To close it completely involves the conquest of Formosa, already under heavy U.S. air attack.

Mr. Hudson in Canada

Mr. R. S. Hudson seems to have put the cat among the pigeons in the course of his brief visit to Canada. We know only from brief reports what he is supposed to have said, and we cannot of course be sure how correctly his attitude has been represented. He appears to have drawn attention to the prospective shortage after the war of Canadian as well as United States dollars available for buying imports to Great Britain; to have said that we in Great Britain were now growing wheat more cheaply than we could buy it from Canada; and to have insisted that we should be able to buy Canadian wheat only to the extent to which the Canadians supplied us with the requisite foreign exchange by buying British exports. Even if Mr. Hudson did say all this, there is nothing sensational about it, except that it comes from a British Cabinet Minister. It has, however, produced very strong reactions. The Canadians have extended their wheat-growing during the war, and need the British market after the war if they are to avoid a considerable contraction of their acreage and a consequent dislocation of their agriculture. We want their wheat, which is better than ours (and, we should have supposed, *pace* Mr. Hudson, cheaper, quality for quality); but our power to buy in dollars must, as Mr. Hudson said, depend on the number of dollars at our disposal. It will not be possible for Canadians both to buy most of their industrial imports from the United States and to sell most of their wheat to us—which is the kind of "multi-lateralism" they appear to have in mind when they accuse Mr. Hudson of advocating "bilateral" discrimination. We do not agree with Mr. Hudson if what he has in mind is a large permanent extension of the British acreage under wheat and an exclusion of Canadian wheat from the British market. But we do agree with him if what he means is that we may be driven to this unless we can persuade the Canadians to buy a reasonable quantity of our exports.

The Seafarers' Charter

The Joint Maritime Commission which met in London last week and considered the Charter drawn up by the seafarers' organisations of most of the leading countries, is one of the more useful of the special bodies associated with the I.L.O. It has a particular interest just now because there are plans for creating similar agencies for other leading industries as part of the revised machinery of the new I.L.O. which it is hoped to create. The seafarers are pressing the shipowners of the world for an international charter, governing manning scales, conditions at sea, and also wages—this last obviously the most difficult matter to regulate on international lines, but one in which seafarers have a special interest, because their calling causes them both to earn and to spend in many different currency areas. There are, of course, quite exceptional difficulties in connection with the employment side by side of European and of Lascar seamen, and with the position of vessels which ply mainly in the Far East and other low-wage areas. In the matter of manning scales and working conditions, the Commission seems to have advanced a long way towards agreement, and it is also agreed in pressing for special efforts to improve the position of seamen in Eastern waters. What is holding it up now is the extreme slowness of the I.L.O. procedure, both in arriving at a Convention in the first instance, and in securing its ratification by the countries concerned. The seafarers' organisations are pressing for a speedier procedure in both these respects. They have a natural desire to strike while the iron is hot, and to get their Charter accepted while the memory of their wartime hardships and services is still fresh in the public mind.

Tories and Housing

The policy report issued this week by the Conservative Party's Housing Sub-Committee is an ingenious document. It combines shrewd vote-catching propaganda with plans to promote, at the public's expense, the interests both of the speculative builder and the owner of depreciating property. In the two first post-war years the construction of 750,000 houses (not the 300,000 stated by the Cabinet to be the practicable maximum) is "imperative." If the electorate remains short of houses it cannot blame the Tories' good intentions; and if it dislikes "Portals," why, the report is highly critical of them. After the first objective of 750,000 new houses is attained, the Tories' target is more modest. To complete slum-clearance and remedy overcrowding, a further 250,000 houses (a shocking understatement) will suffice. Building can and should be supplemented by State-subsidised conversion of "old-fashioned houses" which landlords, presumably, cannot sell or let profitably without expensive reconditioning. But these subsidies for unprofitable white elephants are not to be the end of future calls on the public purse. The construction by private enterprise of any house with a floor area of 1,750 square feet or less is to attract a subsidy amounting to half the increase since 1939 in building costs; and the only condition to be imposed on the recipient of this grant is that *for a period of five years* the rent or selling price of the house will be subject to control. As a revelation of the Tory mind the report is interesting; as a contribution to the housing problem it is worthless.

PARLIAMENT: Eve of Marathon

Wednesday afternoon

On the day that Parliament reassembled, Bevin had a quick and easy success with his important Wages Councils Bill—for the protection against "sweating" of "the overwhelming majority of our people." It was welcomed by the Liberals, by the Young Tories, and of course by the Labour Party; and the second reading was through while many Members were still at lunch. No doubt many Tories will take credit for this measure in their election speeches.

Question-time that morning was rather *piano*, perhaps because Grigg was not in his snappiest form; he seemed far from well, though he dealt competently with a large variety of subjects, including overseas service of A.T.S., home leave schemes, S.H.A.E.F. censorship (alleged by George Strauss to be "political"), and the King Tiger tank. Greece overshadowed every other subject. The Prime Minister apparently meant to be unforthcoming, but allowed himself to be goaded into one or two illuminating comments, and to savage Shinwell with a snarl about "the efforts made by some people in this House greatly to add to the difficulties of our troops." The debate on Thursday and Friday of this week was awaited in tense and unhappy expectancy.

On Wednesday question-time was enlivened by a sharp, prolonged, and hilarious exchange between Sinclair and Stokes, who wanted to know why a report of his speech to airmen in Cairo had been "banned" from appearing in a Service paper. Sinclair said that that paper had a high standard, and that the editor had merely left it out because of pressure of space; there was no ban. Anyway, the speech had referred contemptuously to Teheran and had called the Prime Minister "an old man who enjoys war," and was therefore unsuitable for the troops. Stokes denied the accuracy of Sinclair's report, and insisted that there had been no complaints on the spot.

The most interesting features of the committee stage of the Representation of the People Bill were the Government's new clauses granting overseas troops the postal ballot, and a united front of Liberals, Left Independents, and Common Wealth against plural voting.

PONTIFEX MINOR

THE GREAT ATTACK

THE whole face of the war on the Eastern Front is being changed by the series of Russian offensives begun last week-end in Poland. Withheld until the bulk of the German armoured divisions south of East Prussia had been committed in the abortive effort made by the Sixth Army to relieve Budapest, the Russian attack has achieved an immediate break-through. The plan has probably not yet been fully disclosed, but already its broad outline is discernible. Marshal Zhukov, whose right wing compelled the enemy to evacuate Warsaw, is moving directly on Lodz; and, on his left, Marshal Koniev is striking for Oppeln. What is not yet clear is whether the Russian attack, north of Warsaw, between the Vistula and East Prussia, is aimed simply at isolating East Prussia, or will be pressed across the lower Vistula towards Pomerania. The Russian press, with unusual optimism, is talking of this campaign as "the final battle." Indeed, if the Russians can destroy the cohesion between the five German armies deployed between Lomza and Cracow, a sweeping advance into the Reich before the end of February is on the cards. German armour will doubtless be switched back from Hungary to defend the vital industrial districts of Silesia; but the Germans can hardly denude the front covering Bratislava and Vienna. The factor which seems likely to determine the extent of Russian progress is the enemy's ability to transfer armoured divisions from the Western Front.

It is now evident that von Rundstedt has finally liquidated his costly adventure in Belgium, and that the line in the West will soon be re-established substantially where it was in mid-December. Withdrawn skilfully from the Ardennes salient, the group of eight or nine Panzer divisions with which von Rundstedt attacked is still intact; losses of men and material can be made good in a few weeks at most. Dare he rely, as he did in the autumn, on infantry divisions to hold the Allies for the rest of the winter, while his shock troops go to Poland? Everything depends on the speed with which General Eisenhower can regroup his forces for a renewed offensive and on his ability to create conditions in which von Rundstedt must use his armoured reserves. Every consideration, military, political and personal—not excluding the desire of Allied Army Group commanders to have their individual "place in the sun—" should now be subordinated to the paramount necessity of "pinning" the German forces in the West.

BRITAIN'S BLACK MARKET

THE appointment of Sir Charles Tegart to co-ordinate the activities of Ministry of Food and Board of Trade enforcement officers against illegal traffic in rationed commodities has prompted several popular newspapers to "feature" the Black Market. On the basis of a modicum of generally recognised facts—that the unscrupulous citizen who knows the ropes can acquire, outside the law, petrol and butter, and can also (without committing any offence) stock his larder and cellar with game and whiskey unobtainable by most of us—there has been erected a superstructure of sensational mystery. It is hinted that "master minds" are at work; that they have organised a nation-wide racket; that in dealing with a huge, sinister organisation in which whole City Councils are implicated, and whose inspiration is, of course, "the Jews," the police are powerless to apprehend "the Big Men in the Background."

Into the facts underlying this press campaign we have thought it desirable to look; for nothing could do greater damage to national morale than the impression that, with official acquiescence or complicity, criminal fortunes are being amassed by racketeers too powerful to arrest. In truth, the "Napoleons of Crime" who are alleged to control the Black Market exist only in the imagination of Fleet Street. All the evidence before us points to the conclusions: (1) That the war has brought in its train a lamentable increase in petty pilfering; (2) that amateur receivers have multiplied like the amateur prostitutes to be seen in every city; (3) that small gangs of criminals do organise thefts both of foodstuffs and other scarce goods; (4) that few among Britain's 45 million purchasers of consumer goods are completely innocent of some infraction of the rationing orders.

The truth is that rationing and price control, because they greatly restrict our freedom in the quest for necessities and comforts, have exposed (as few social phenomena have done before) the conflict between the individual and the community in a competitive society. Rationing and points are good, says Dives; "inflation would ruin me." They are good, echoes Lazarus, because the poor will at least get what they are supposed to get. And they both proceed to augment their share by every device and at every opportunity. They are uneasily aware that they are behaving immorally and they cannot quite succeed in rationalising their uneasiness by reference to "human nature." Hence the urge, to which Fleet Street is pandering, to find a demonological scapegoat—The Big Black Marketeer—against whom can be vented all the emotions made up of war-weariness, dislike of discipline and a sense of minor personal guilt. The Master Racketeer serves as a focus for mass indignation and an excuse for the extra ounce of butter; the hunt is up, the quarry running furtively with the hounds.

Once established as an idea, the Black Market attracts a whole literature of hate. Its very existence shows that the Police and the Ministries are inefficient, corrupt, or not trying. We're doing our best, say the enforcement officers, but the magistrates won't back us up—they inflict minor penalties or dismiss our cases under the Probation of Offenders Act. Further Press campaigning, more angry questions in the House. Very well, rationing and price control offences shall be made indictable, with maximum penalties of fourteen years' penal servitude. These shall attach to any "breach of the control," so defined by Defence Regulation 55 as to include rationing and price-control offences of any kind. Newspapers are scanned for reports of these spectacular penal measures in operation. Any Jews, or foreigners? Ha!—a Jacob, a Solly, £1,500 and costs. Up goes a howl of execration from the law-abiding. Brown and his wife, whose Sunday joint was only one-and-fivepence "over the top," can hardly read their shaking newspapers. What are we fighting for? A country fit for racketeers to thrive in? What are the Police doing? New appointments at the Ministries are announced. Photographs of hawk-eyed executives accompany articles "foreshadowing" great "drives" against the secret organisers of the Black Market—the Big Men (with criminal records) "operating from secret hide-outs," changing their headquarters frequently, employing armies of tight-lipped agents, putting up an occasional stooge for prosecution for the sake of verisimilitude, and making immense profits while the world goes short.

Now, criminologists all agree that if there were no receivers or "fences," stealing would be confined to petty pilfering, the larceny of small articles desired by the thief for himself. The Police, who know this better than anyone, will whenever possible defer the arrest or prosecution of a thief until they know where he is disposing of his booty; though the prosecution of the receiver, even so, is generally frustrated by the difficulty of proving "guilty knowledge." (The analogy is nearly perfect, and the consumer who solicits or accepts some of the five per cent. "cutting allowance" in the meat allocated to butchers, pays £5 for a bottle of whisky, or ogles the dairymaid for an extra egg will do well to identify himself with the receiver of stolen property.) The comparative immunity of the receiver has the effect that, when a large-scale receiver is at last convicted, headlines portray him as a "prince of the underworld," a "master crook," a "modern Fagin," or a "Napoleon of Crime"; he must always be the focal point of a "ring" or network. The reality to-day is that receiving has become the speciality of the squalid crowd of petty gangsters who frequent dog-racing and used, in pre-war days, to provide "protection" to bookmakers at horse races.

There is an enormous amount of loose cash circulating among this queer, amoral class of citizens, who are immaculately dressed, semi-literate, and beyond the reach of the Inland Revenue. They have little to spend it on; so, because they have "contacts" in the right places, they can always find a few pounds, or a few thousand pounds, for the proceeds of larcenies which have a special value to-day—clothing, furniture, foodstuffs, liquor, hardware, fancy goods, cosmetics. Most of it is stolen in transit, either from the railways (by railway staff and otherwise) or from the docks, where lorries disappear with all their contents. Much is pilfered from Army and R.A.F. canteens, and from Service depots. Much of it finds its way to middlemen who know it is "black market" but not that it is stolen, and whose consciences are thus not unduly strained. (It is an odd fact that whereas the receiver of stolen property, in normal times, invites suspicion by the low prices he pays for the swag, the purchaser of black market produce betrays his complicity by paying prices that are far too high.) And so at last it reaches *us*—the "middling-honest" public.

There are so many people to-day exposed to the temptation to shut the eye to the possibility that offered goods have been stolen. The village grocer, the proprietor of the small café—both suffering from restricted volume of trade—are apt to stifle their conscience when they are offered that tempting case of sugar or syrup—"auctioned salvage from a bombed warehouse." And who is to deny positively the story that the (stolen) wine came from a "deceased's estate in the country" or that the (poached) hares or peasants were legitimately purchased—at second or third hand? Investigation officers can only select the worst cases among a multitude, for the quantities of stuff involved vary from a couple of extra back-rashers to a hundred tons of granulated sugar. Rackets like the latter, or others involving housefuls of furniture, lorry-loads of boots and shoes, and large consignments of clothing (the pair of socks that were "surplus Civil Defence stock," the slippers that were intended for the Dutch before it was realised that they all wore clogs) do, of course, need organising; and the bigger the job the more people there are in the know and the greater the precautions to be taken for secrecy. But these are the "mobs," and they have only an *ad hoc* existence. There is no gang of arch-criminals, no supreme command directing economic war on the community from a luxury flat in Park Lane.

That Jews figure largely in some sections of the Black Market is not to be denied; nor is it a phenomenon discrepant with obvious probability. A considerable proportion of the distributing trades, both in food and clothing, is normally in Jewish hands; and, when illegality enters into these trades to the extent now current, prosecutions are bound to reveal a preponderance of Jewish names. This provides no evidence of greater Gentile honesty. In fact, neither the Jew nor the "master-criminal" is a legitimate scapegoat. If we examine objectively what is meant by the Black Market, as men once examined what they meant by witchcraft, we shall decide that it is simply the criminal fringe to a universal market, artificially stimulated by war-scarcity, in which human greed is exploited for profit. It is the inevitable cancer in the body of an acquisitive society.

THE FRENCH AND THEIR ALLIES

OPINIONS about the future foreign policy of France must be highly speculative. It is more useful, I think, to discuss the present attitudes of the French to their various allies. Let me begin with the Americans, since these are everywhere in France so much in evidence. Half the traffic in Paris is American; on the main roads one keeps meeting convoys of American lorries miles long; at the Front the French armies are clad, armed and fed by the Americans—though, alas, not in face of the French Atlantic ports where the F.F.I. besieging the Germans lack artillery and even such simple necessities as boots. The magnitude of the American war effort is everywhere manifest. Indeed, I heard Frenchmen talk of the period of "the American landings" as if the British had played no part in the liberation of France. Nevertheless the Americans cannot be said to be universally popular. I doubt if any foreign army, even when it has come to expel a detested invader, can hope to go on being liked. The French, moreover, are a deeply conventional as well as a proud people, and allow themselves to be shocked by the youthful exuberance of the Americans, who often behave—at least this was my impression—much less considerately in France than they do in England. One root of the trouble is that they feel that they are over in Europe to fight on behalf not of themselves but of the Europeans. I believe this to be an illusion, but I am certain that it can never be dispelled. Owing to the dollar rate of exchange they find themselves much poorer in France than here; and one result is that they bootleg Army petrol (and other goods) on an enormous scale. This is delightful for a minority of the French, but does not enhance American prestige. A particularly sore point is the American treatment of German prisoners. The French know that these are regularly fed on such luxuries as cocoa while their own children are dying for lack of milk. It is useless to talk of international agreements about the treatment of prisoners. The French are aware that their husbands and brothers in German prison-camps get less food than is necessary. And no talk about the Geneva Convention will convince them that the German prisoners should be given more than is necessary, in a country that they have methodically reduced to semi-starvation. The Americans, while they may reasonably consider such criticism to be unjust, must realise that it is entirely natural; and the only answer to it is a supreme effort to bring more help to the French. The difficulties of doing so are prodigious, but the Americans can achieve prodigies; and for political as well as humane reasons a superhuman effort is necessary. Without more help from the Allies the French Government can do little to reduce starvation, unemployment and eventual disorder. I say "the Allies," because even with our very limited resources, I believe we could send more help to the homeless people from the destroyed towns of Normandy, who are living in appalling misery.

Next, the U.S.S.R. The French rich, who have learnt nothing, have certainly not learnt to moderate their hatred of Russia. On the other hand the Communists, and many who are not Communists, are entirely uncritical. There is no objective opinion about the U.S.S.R., because there is no objective information. Before the Liberation there was the grotesque but not entirely unsuccessful anti-Bolshevik propaganda of Vichy and the Germans; to-day, on the other hand, no newspaper would venture to print such relatively mild and friendly criticisms of Russian policy as appear in these columns. The Communist intellectuals would feel, though they would not express, dismay at the official Soviet attitude to the arts as revealed here recently by a correspondent who seemed to approve of it.

The Franco-Russian treaty was not published till after my return to England, but I have little doubt that it has been welcomed by most Frenchmen, including even many of the reactionaries. On the other hand, I know that some fervent democrats fear it may augur the combination of a foreign policy subservient to Russia with a reactionary policy at home—in fact, that it may be a skilful bid to appease Communist opposition. The advantages of the alliance are obvious: it resumes a French tradition; and it is based upon a common fear of Germany. (Probably Stalin has encouraged the French in their territorial claims upon Germany, claims that I personally think reasonable, though I know they are repugnant to many members of the English Left.) There is a further point about the Franco-Russian Treaty. The French, at any rate for the present, can hope for no material assistance from the Russians. They therefore can negotiate with them on more apparently equal terms than with their other Allies. The Americans, and, to a lesser extent, the British are tempted—very mistakenly, as I think—to consider chiefly the present weakness of France, of which they are continually reminded by the necessity for bringing help. The Russians do not overlook, though they too may underestimate, the potential strength of France. In any case they know that they can depend more certainly upon the French than upon the Americans or ourselves for persistence in anti-German feeling. On the other hand, one does not see any possibility of important economic interchanges between the U.S.S.R. and France; and foreign policy after the war will presumably be determined by economic at least as much as by strategic motives.

The French attitude to the British I found overwhelmingly friendly; they are sometimes puzzled but full of admiration. (Again I must emphasise the lack of information about all foreign countries that still remains in France, a lack which the press is not very active in supplying. The reappearance of *Le Temps*, under the new name of *Le Monde*, is welcome if only for its foreign news.) The fact that there are comparatively few British troops now in France I consider a help to Anglo-French good feeling—and this, though I have the best evidence for saying that the behaviour of those who come to Paris on leave is exemplary. Again it is a good thing in the long run, I believe, that no section of the French press pretends that we are infallible. (The French do not enjoy—who would?—hearing their compatriots consistently exalt a foreign country above their own.) Most Frenchmen look to us as the Ally whose civilisation and situation are most akin to theirs, But remembering the past, they fear that we shall again help to make the Germans a menace to their neighbours. It must be remembered that the Armistice left many Frenchmen feeling bitter against us. And not unreasonably. We had smiled upon German rearmament, even signing a naval agreement that contravened the Versailles Treaty—and this without consulting the French. We had allowed the remilitarisation of the Rhine. And then we had suddenly changed our policy—so the argument ran—and induced the France we had weakened to declare war, sending ourselves only a small expeditionary force. For these reasons, good and bad, it was possible for French patriots, especially in the unoccupied zone while this still existed, to hate both the invader and their erstwhile ally. Béraud, in his recent trial for treason, claimed to be such a patriot. And Mauriac whose pro-British feelings are unquestionable, protested against the sentence of death passed upon Béraud, on the ground that Anglophobia, though a grave fault in wartime, was not identical with treason. This view excited general opposition in the Paris press, which insisted that to write against the country that was alone fighting Germany must be considered a proof of pro-German activity. Nevertheless, I am glad that General de Gaulle commuted the death sentence. I detest Béraud—and *Gringoire*, the vile Fascist paper in which he wrote. But the very fact that he was so maniacally anti-British before the war is some excuse for his later activities. They came from the heart and not from a desire to please the enemy. Above all I fear that to treat anti-British sentiment as a capital offence in a Frenchman might in the long run excite resentment against us. How lamentable if anyone ever came to entertain the absurd delusion that one of his countrymen had been sacrificed to British vindictiveness!

At the moment the danger to Anglo-French friendship is quite different. As the French newspapers make painfully clear, our policy in Greece has caused dismay to all the French, except to those who regret the disappearance of Pétain, and to such Communists as like to see our prestige diminish. Though their comments are restrained, the resistant French assume we have been killing their Greek counterparts. I am not discussing whether they are correct in their view of our policy in Greece; I merely state what their view is. And whatever the rights and wrongs of this policy, its deplorable effects in the other liberated countries cannot be overlooked. There was already, I noticed in Paris, a possibility that the pro-Russian enthusiasm of the Communists might win for us the unwelcome and dangerous friendship of the ex-collaborators, who, however, incline rather to pin their hopes on Wall Street.

All talk of a Western European bloc I believe to be inopportune, chiefly because the relative strength of our two countries is—at present—such that the French would feel that in such a bloc they were being allotted a secondary role. Some years hence, when they have recuperated and when we are more alive to our demographic and economic difficulties, both peoples may discover that closer political ties between them are necessary, unless each is to become the satellite of some larger country. But at the moment it is far wiser and more useful to concentrate upon fostering economic and cultural interchanges.

Of economics I am qualified to say nothing, unless it be to repeat the common sense arguments of our grandfathers in favour of free trade across the Channel. On the other hand, I know from experience how seriously contact with French civilisation can enrich an Englishman's life; and I discovered in France an unprecedented eagerness for more intimate knowledge of England. Do we believe in ourselves—and in Europe—enough to encourage and gratify this friendly curiosity? I am not sure. During the German occupation the broadcasts in French from London were the daily bread of the French people—I had overwhelming evidence of their gratitude from every class of the population. In future, relations with foreign countries will depend upon the wireless as much as upon diplomacy. But, amazing to relate, the B.B.C. have not yet opened a Paris office, where the French can obtain information about coming broadcasts and provide information about their own requirements. To anyone whose business is the supreme importance of Anglo-French friendship this is ominous, for it seems to reveal a return to the old insular indifference to foreign opinion. One may reasonably doubt whether we can afford to neglect so important an asset as the good will deservedly built up by the B.B.C.

The British Council, on the other hand, has already opened an office, and we may hope that it will rise to its magnificent opportunities. The most urgent need, I suggest, is less to dilate upon our past glories or our present war effort than to explain our projects for the future—national insurance and control of investments. I returned from Paris alarmed by the material difficulties of the French, but profoundly impressed by their continuing intellectual vigour. I am convinced that we have much to learn from them as well as they from us. I believe that both peoples have the same wish for radical reforms, the same distaste for revolution. I am forced to conclude that, whether in the long run French sympathy goes chiefly to the Russians or to ourselves, depends in the first place upon whether we are thought of as the country of banks and trusts or as the country of Beveridge and Keynes.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A LONDON DIARY

From all I hear, the Labour delegation which went to Mr. Churchill on Greece and reported to the Parliamentary party on Wednesday, feel that the interview was worth while. Mr. Churchill stated that "no proscription" must mean an amnesty; and I gather that he is also alive to the dangers of a faked election, and sympathetic to the argument that the way to "pacify" the countryside dominated by E.A.M. is not by conquest, as Plastiras suggests, but by arranging for food to be distributed to hungry areas. The R.A.F. would welcome this policy. Service friends who have recently returned from Greece described to me the immense enthusiasm of our welcome there among all classes and ranks; the warm friendships that were springing up between Greek workers and the British as well as between the Athenian middle classes and the officers, and the great plans the R.A.F. had already worked out for feeding Greece. They must have hated throwing bombs instead of bread. But if that is Mr. Churchill's view, why did he choose Plastiras who, as the *Times* recalled when he became Premier, carried out executions in 1922 that "embittered Greek political life for a generation"?

* * *

If you want to understand why the Greek Left is not all smiles when told that a plebiscite will settle the future of Greece, I recommend you to read *Exiles in the Aegean*, written by an Australian journalist named Birtles a couple of years before the war. He was an eye-witness of the faked plebiscite which provided the excuse for King George's return to Greece in 1935. Birtles describes how General Kondylis first staged his *coup d'état* in September 1935 and then used his authority to terrorise his Republican opponents.

It was supposed to be a secret ballot. There were blue papers for the Royalists and red ones for the Republicans . . . The blue ones had the inscription on them, "For the Crowned Democracy." The red ones, "For the Uncrowned Democracy." All the polling booth officials were Royalists, and the envelopes in which the ballot papers had to be placed were transparent.

Birtle's landlord went with a friend to see what would happen if they tried to vote Republican.

His friend went into the booth first and was offered a blue paper. "I don't want that one," he said. "I want to vote for Democracy, not for the King."

The officials refused to give him a red paper.

"I came here to exercise my right as a citizen."

"Don't raise your voice here; get outside," another policeman shouted. "Raise my voice! I was only asking for a ballot paper." The policeman dragged him outside and beat him up with clubs, and punched him . . . There was no traffic on the streets all day; except lorry loads of soldiers who were driven from booth to booth to double up the voting. At first the soldiers had to get down off the lorries and go into the booths to vote individually, but as a Royalist officer boasted in our presence that night, "After our batch had voted seventeen times they got fed up with getting up and down from the lorries, so we let them vote *en bloc*."

The soldiers did their duty; for all except 2,000 votes went to the "Crowned Democracy."

* * *

One of the most telling refutations of the charge that E.L.A.S. partisans have conserved their forces for civil war instead of fighting the Germans is to be found in letters and diaries found on German casualties and prisoners. There are frequent references to partisan attacks; night marches are strenuous and dangerous, for the guerrillas sting like fleas at the given time"; there are many guerrillas here, and we always have trouble with them"; "the guerrillas do all they can to force us from the coast—every day they suffer heavy casualties." One diarist reports a punitive expedition against a village believed to be sheltering partisans. The dates on these letters are from October and November, 1944. I got a very strong impression from them of the depressed and harassed condition of the Nazi soldiers in Albania and Greece, which is described in one of their songs as the "World's Backside." These army songs are pessimistic and cynical. Take, for example, this verse, which would hardly be approved by the Nazi hierarchy:

> But if you're really thinking that the Reich you'll never see,
> Well, cheer up, trusty comrade, and fill your heart with glee.
> The Reich will have a record of "how in Greece he died"
> Complete with disc as witness of "corpse identified."

This is apparently the German army equivalent of "Oh, Oh, I don't want to die!"

* * *

According to an authoritative report that recently reached me from the Balkans, the German settlements on the Danube have not waited for the arrival of the Red Army but have been swept away into the Reich with the retreating Wehrmacht. This accords with the policy that Germany has adopted all through from the first evacuation of the Baltic States onwards. It is part of the general Nazi idea of concentrating all people of German "race" into the Reich. I hear in particular of one area, inhabited by 350,000 Germans, which was completely empty when the Russians arrived. They had gone—men, women and children, horses and cattle. When they reached Austria the cattle were slaughtered, the horses taken by the German Army, and the men, who were prosperous farmers on the Danube, were sent as agricultural workers into Germany. This is an important pointer for the future. It seems probable that the German population will have vacated East Prussia before it is occupied by Poles and Russians, and I should expect a large number of the Sudeten Germans also to have left Czechoslovakia. Americans have, I think, an illusion that there will be a Peace Treaty like Versailles, where the big Powers will solemnly sit down and arrange frontiers. The situation is not like that. The frontiers will have arranged themselves while the fighting is going on.

* * *

One of the younger Service candidates who is standing for Labour tells me that he is bothered by the lack of a quite simple statement of Labour policy on the main issues which will excite the electorate. In time, we shall get a simple formulation from Transport House (which suffers like the rest of us from paper shortage), but speed is essential. After three years overseas, my friend wants to know just what Labour proposes about full employment, whether the Beveridge security proposals are accepted as they stand or only with improvements, how Labour proposes to deal with housing and so forth. The pamphlets so far published by Labour H.Q. he finds too complex and technical. As for the soldier-voter overseas, he needs a statement of Labour policy that can be typed on an airgraph.

* * *

Westminster City Council has an admirable plan for developing a "colony" of modern flats in the accessible but now dreary and devastated waste lands of Pimlico. It is proposed to build 2,635 flats, and sites are to be compulsorily purchased. The cost of building will be, it is estimated, £1,786,000; the cost of acquiring the sites £2,347,000. That is to say, nearly three-fifths of the rents will go in interest on loans raised to buy out the ground-landlords. This is an intolerable situation. Apart from the gross inflation of site values in Pimlico, the decision that the cost of acquiring land for rebuilding must be borne by local authorities will put Councils less rich than Westminster in serious difficulties. The only right course, it seems to me, is for all sites required for rebuilding to be acquired by the State and leased to local authorities.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. Lewis.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

This is not so old-fashioned. A friend of mine, with a child three years old, is at present giving the mite stewed mice for bladder trouble—and is curing her. Of course, she buys clean, healthy mice from a pets' store.—Letter in *Daily Mirror*.

A French orphan, Marie Labouchere, aged 1 year, has been adopted by Mr. and Mrs. K. C. Jones, 63 Sholtus Avenue, Prestwick. In an interview with Mrs. Jones early this morning I was informed that she and her husband intend learning French, so that they will be able to talk to the baby when it grows up.—*Ayr Advertiser*.

There is a moral somewhere in this: During the recent hard frosts we have put out bacon rind for the birds after breakfast on the four days our ration lasted. On the first day they cleared it at once. On the second day, when we used our portion of American fat bacon, they ignored it. —Letter in *Sunday Express*.

Mr. West is only the fourth man to have cut the King's hair since before he became Duke of York.—*Evening Standard*.

SURPRISE AND REGRET

The publication of King Peter's Statement caused the utmost surprise and regret among British Ministers.—*Times*, January 12th.

When Balkan bandits disagree
About a Royal Regency,
And inter-Allied harmony
  Is partially upset,
The Ministers assigned to deal
With outbreaks of Resistance zeal,
In diplomatic terms reveal
  Unqualified regret.

But while the Diplomatic Corps
All differences must deplore,
Regret is mixed with something more
  When kings bar compromise.
A breach of Royal etiquette,
Though fortunately seldom met,
Inspires a more profound regret,
  Commingled with surprise.

The Monarch who will not confer
With the appropriate Minister,
Provokes a poignant *cri de cœur*
  From all the Cabinet;
When he rejects what they advise,
His action stuns and stupefies—
Regret is sharpened by surprise,
  Surprise outweighs regret.

The ill-advised communiqué
Spreads Ministerial dismay,
And calls emotions into play
  More hard to analyse—
The Foreign Office stands amazed,
Officials are completely dazed,
Regrets, however suavely phrased,
  Do not conceal surprise.

Despite all past experience,
A lack of Royal confidence
Arouses feelings too intense
  To cover or disguise.
When Kings in exile forget
How deep they are in Britain's debt,
Surprise intensifies regret,
  Regret includes surprise.

SAGITTARIUS

IN DUBIOUS BATTLE

[From Our American Correspondent]

The United States has had the misfortune to have all its history fall within the era of record collecting; as a result, a real history of the nation has never been written—it has been monographed out of existence. This makes America peculiarly liable to be hoaxed about its own past. After the last war an assortment of propagandists sold the country on the belief that its intervention in 1917 was due to the machinations of J. P. Morgan's finance, Basil Zaharoff's merchants of death, the East Coast sentimentalists and British propaganda. It is of vital significance for the future peace of the world to find what myth will be used to cover the bald facts of America's entrance into this war.

A mild sensation was caused by the recent appearance of a book by Walter Johnson, a young History Professor at the University of Chicago, called *The Battle Against Isolationism*. Here at last, we were told, was the story of how America's blindfold brigade had been defeated and forced to look at the facts of international life by the few who saw life steadily and saw it whole. But (at least to the outsider daring to peer into the American Arcana) the picture seems to be one of the blind being led by the myopic and being saved only by Providence from the deepest of ditches.

Of one thing at least the "Interventionists" are cleared by this book; they were never warmongers. Mr. Johnson deals chiefly with the main group opposed to Isolation—the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, headed by the late William Allen White. Its opinions may be taken as representative of those Americans who thought the defeat of the Axis was essential to the United States' security. Yet even this body was entirely defensive in its battle against Isolation; always half believing the charges made against it.

Their leader, William Allen White, the best loved of all American newspapermen, was the constant victim of the catch-phrases of the Isolationists and Disillusionists of the 1920s. When the Committee was formed, he announced that he would not serve as its head unless all contributions were refused from "munition-makers, international bankers and steel interests." Thus once again flesh was put upon the whitening bones disinterred in the early Thirties by the leading Isolationist—Senator Nye—in his committee on the causes of America's intervention in 1917. If White had been a little more new-fangled in his idea, he might have felt compelled to refuse all contributions from capitalists—which would have considerably reduced his takings.

White again revealed his acceptance of the damaging misinterpretations of the Isolationists after his victorious struggle for the amendment of the Neutrality Act, so as to permit Allied purchases in America. Hearing that certain American ships were changing their registry so as to carry goods directly to the war zones, he charged that American shipowners were once again endangering American peace by their "greed for blood money." Needless to say, all these concessions failed to mollify his opponents, who charged that White was a senile warmonger and his Committee a bunch of "Interventionists"—a bitterly resented term of reproach.

The battle cry of the Isolationists was "This is not our war." The Interventionists parroted this very cry, but went on to argue that it would become America's war if the Allies did not defeat Germany. So unsurpassedly evil did war seem that there was nothing strange or ignoble about the slogan "All aid short of war." This principle of limited liability in war was best expressed by White in a national broadcast on October 15th, 1939: "These democracies west of the Rhine . . . are digging our first-line trenches. We need not shed our blood for them now or ever. But we should not deny them access to our shores when they come with cash to pay for weapons of defence . . . for our common cause."

To have others fight for the "common cause" was tough realistic thinking worthy of a wise guy who understood the world. To be pro-British was stupid sentimentality, of the sort which had led "Uncle Sam" so astray in the past. The chairman of this so-called Interventionist group, we are told, "was at no time a slavish admirer of England and the Tory aristocracy." No course of action was admitted as valid which had not been passed as rigorously self-regarding.

Yet all the time the genuine idealism of the American people, which no amount of denial will destroy, keeps showing through the tough guy mask. Admiration for the stand of Great Britain in 1940 was admitted on all hands to be the main factor in recruiting the White Committee's ranks. At the same time the apparently straight realist approach of Mr. Lindbergh in demanding an agreement with "a Europe dominated by Germany . . . which would maintain peace and civilisation throughout the world as far into the future as we can see" was not even regarded seriously by any significant proportion of the population. Like a small boy afraid of being teased because he reads poetry, America still rushes to hide the least sign of that honest emotion which is her finest characteristic.

Circumscribed as it was by the phantoms of Isolationist history, the Committee had to confine its activities to beating up support for the President's policy of self-defence. Mr. Johnson's detailed account of the methods employed to this end gives us a fascinating insight into the American system of Government by Telegram. First some member of the Committee would be allowed to discover that the President wished to make some move—say, turn over fifty destroyers to Britain. The Committee would then go into action, getting tens of thousands of people to telegraph the President or their Congressman urging such a move. After sufficient pressure had been exerted the President would make the move.

Such methods, though superficially absurd and profitable only to the privately owned telegraph companies, are properly democratic and effective. But the danger should be recognised that they can be made to seem highly sinister, since the public unfortunately derives its knowledge of diplomatic history from E. Phillips Oppenheim rather than Gooch and Temperley. It is a fairly sure bet that there will be an attempt to represent the Committee again, as Father Coughlin represented it at the time, as "the most dangerous fifth column that ever set foot upon neutral soil."

At this point I would like to weigh up the successes and failures of the White Committee, but I am faced with the same difficulty that defeated Mr. Johnson—that of defining the real objects of that body. Lack of clarity on this matter also led to the break-up of the whole organisation.

By 1941 it seemed certain to an incorrigibly optimistic America that Britain had staved off defeat. The question once more became pressing: "Could America get the war won without fighting it?" Many American political observers agree that the country on the whole answered that question "yes." Particularly after Russia's entry into the war, which made the victory of Germany and of the Western democratic ideals both seem less likely, America moved away from intervention.

As early as December of 1940—as soon as the Battle of Britain was won—the disintegration of the Committee began. As the risk of an attack on America by an all-victorious Germany receded, the risk of America's involvement in a "foreign" war loomed larger. White—and he was typical of millions of others—was appalled by this second risk. In reply to a threatened attack on his Committee for "warmongering," he wrote: "The only reason in God's world I am in this organisation is to keep the country out of war. War would defeat the end for which our Committee is organised—to defend America by aiding Britain—and would bring on a thirty-year conflict." Soon White resigned from the Committee muttering imprecations that the Easterners on it were "hell bent for war."

By way of an obituary on the defunct Committee, Mr. Johnson writes: "Perhaps it was fortunate that Pearl Harbour came and forced upon the vast majority of Americans an awareness that when brute force is loose in the world, it is our business to stop it. Aid short of war was not enough." But this is to assume that events teach future generations lessons. Events do not, but History may. Pearl Harbour did not settle the Isolationist-Interventionist debate; it merely stopped it temporarily, and then transferred it to a different level. The debate is still the core of American political life.

The recent election was interpreted as a repudiation, even in the heart of the Mid-West, of Isolationism. So it well may be, and it will have its effect on the sort of Peace Treaties which can be written. None the less, the old phrase might be refurbished to run "let who will write a nation's peace treaties if I may write its histories." What are the reasons America has entered two wars in Europe? What were the real arguments of the Isolationists and of the Interventionists? In monographs such as *The Battle Against Isolationism* we find no answer to these problems, only a fervent one-sided account for the sole edification of like-minded persons.

REPORT ON THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION

One of the speakers at the British Association Conference last week-end, Professor J. M. Mackintosh, the new Dean of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, suggested that Science has been too long the Genie of the Lamp and now ought to try to be the Aladdin. Reverberations in Southern England are a reminder of what the Genie is capable when the Lamp is rubbed the wrong way. Could the Genie turned Aladdin be trusted to rub it the right way? Judging by the attitude and purpose shown by the eminent scientists who took part in the discussions during those two days, I think they could. Or, at least, they proved that the Genie ought to be consulted before the Lamp is rubbed.

The presence of two members of the War Cabinet, Mr. Ernest Bevin, as Chairman of the first session and Lord Woolton, as Chairman of the last, shows an encouraging disposition to do so. Bevin was speaking both as a Minister and as a Trade Union leader. Woolton was speaking both as Minister for Reconstruction and as an experienced business man. They both agreed that the experience gained in war of using not only the results of scientific research and inventiveness, but the scientific approach to wider problems (in war, even to strategy and operations) was indispensable to the solution of the problems of the peace.

The Conference was on "The Place of Science in Industry," but its implications went much further because there was a marked tendency among the speakers to challenge the aims and character of industry. The criticisms were not confined to the old complaints of the scientists about the pittance which industry spends on research while "cashing in" on the work of the scientists (Lord Woolton said "it must not be possible in the future to say that only one-tenth of one per cent. of the national income is spent on science.") They complained that such research as industry did was confined to "short-term" or "applied" science aimed at producing a profitable result in a given time, to the neglect of "fundamental" or "pure" science, which Lord McGowan, of I.C.I., revealingly called "speculative research." Fundamental (or "speculative") research is the quest for knowledge, without demands or "dead-lines"; it is the fitful rain that fills the reservoirs of science and industry; if it should dry up—if there were no Faradays, Clerk Maxwells or Rutherfords—industry and progress would perish of the drought. Hitherto it has lived from hand to mouth; its equipment (as has been said of the world-famous Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge) has been "stri

and sealing-wax." Something substantial will have to be done about this after the war.

But here there is a fresh threat from industry which Professor P. M. S. Blackett, F.R.S., pointed out in one of the most statesmanlike speeches I have ever heard from a scientist. He warned large industrial firms to be chary about luring, by big salaries, our best fundamental scientists into applied science as a supposed remedy for the faults of former managerial mismanagement and of an economic system which is crazily out of joint; and he warned his colleagues that they would be equally mistaken if they conceived it to be their social duty to accept such jobs. He drew the moral from the wartime experience of the fundamental scientists (of whom he himself is a conspicuous example) who abandoned their long-term tasks and gave their brains and their skill to applied research and the urgencies of war. They had done so out of national necessity, and, after the war, the same plea would again be used by industry as a pretext to divert them from their real scientific purpose. They would find themselves asked to produce the refinements—"Wireless sets to receive another short-wave band that no one wants to listen to"—which concerned only competitive industry. National necessity does not demand these things; it demands that the scientific method should be directed to the mass-production of the things needed to raise the standard of living of the common people and to the cheapening of these necessities, and not to the increasing of fancy lines. The lively social-conscience which science has developed in recent years never spoke more clearly than it did through Blackett.

Bevin, when he was Chairman of the T.U.C., called in the British Association and set up the Scientific Advisory Committee which was supposed to guide the Trade Unions about developments which were looming ahead and which would call for readjustments in labour supply; it was not his fault that it never met after his term of office. Now he was again showing the same visionary common sense. He spoke of the grave shortage of scientific workers which the war had revealed; of the brilliant contributions which, in spite of that, British science had made; of the obtuseness of industry towards scientific progress; and of the need for the State to bear the cost of developing new industries. He assailed the patent system and the stultification of science by the monopolies. He bitterly complained that the advantages of science take so long to reach the mass of the people.

The attitude of the oncoming generation of scientists was revealed by Sir Lawrence Bragg, F.R.S.: "Young people," he said, "incline to the Left in their politics, with a good deal of idealism, and like to feel that their work is directed mainly to considerations of social service. They distrust the present economic and competitive structure of industry. I am not trying to judge whether they are right, I am merely reporting my impressions of the cause of the reluctance which most university teachers encounter when they try to induce their students to take industrial posts."

In the closing session of a conference which ranged over the future of aviation; of telecommunications; of the new textile industries; of plastics; of synthetic vitamins; of light alloys; of housing; of nutrition; and of preventive medicine, Lord Woolton delivered a recruiting speech for Reconstruction. He made it clear that he was asking not only for the material contributions of science-like new materials for housing, or contributions to our feeding, or new types of manufacture—but for scientists to take their share in the strategy of reconstruction. The war has placed scientists, literally, not metaphorically, at the right hand of our military, naval and air strategists and found them applying the same principles as they use in their laboratories, to battle practice. He made it clear that, though the Genie might not rub the Lamp, it could apply the Brasso. He was also very emphatic about the responsibility of the State for promoting and financing Science, and underlined Bevin by saying that in war we have seen the value of endowing development, of nursing new ideas and techniques through the difficult period of infancy and teething troubles instead of leaving them as foundlings to be picked up by the commercial passer-by. He predicted that, with the help of science, we shall provide more drudgeless homes in three years that we could previously have done in ten.

As a practical outcome of the meeting, Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S., proposed that a small body of trained people be appointed to examine the relationship of science and industry and build a working partnership between them. That would be useful. So would a scientific survey of the real assets of this country in relation to the vast developments which new scientific discoveries have made possible. It might serve among other things to remind the public and politicians alike that nationalisation of the coal industry does not mean "taking over an insolvent industry." It means the State acquiring the father and mother of innumerable new industries, which science has made possible, and which it may have to nurse (in Woolton's words) through the "teething stage" but which will grow up to make the coal industry and this country truly prosperous.

RITCHIE CALDER

THE HERO COMES HOME

THERE could hardly have been differences of opinion about the acting in Miss Daphne Du Maurier's new play at Wyndham's Theatre, *The Years Between*, or about Miss Henschell's direction of it: both were so excellent. But critics have differed about the merit of the play itself, the main objection being a sentimental one, that an exceptionally sympathetic young lover should not win the lady who loves him; but that, at his own prompting, she should stick to a husband whose character and behaviour seem the reverse of amiable. It was because *The Years Between* disappointed the sentimentalist in me that I thought well of it. I enjoyed not only the dramatist's light touches which the actors never failed to make good, but its close also, which left me with something—an idea? an emotion? How ought one to describe such residual impressions?—to remember and consider.

Up goes the curtain on a fine country-house library; a small boy is reading on his tummy on the floor. (By the way, no one has failed to praise the performance of Master John Gilpin, made possible by "Robin" never being given a single line unsuited to his age). He is just a nice, lively, inconsiderate, self-centred boy, such as you might adore if he were your own and tolerate if he were not. Enter with tea-things a dignified, rather anxious, rather sad, Nanny. She has barely opened her lips before we grasp that she is the prop and pillar of this war-time household; one of those old servants who identify themselves with the family, and feel themselves to be more trusted—and more important!—than most friends and relations. Miss Henrietta Watson is only a hairbreadth off perfection; her manner of speech is a shade too educated. Later on, the dramatist adds a little dab to "Nanny's" portrait, characteristic of glints of insight into human nature which constantly pleased me in the play. Though unselfconsciously dignified and considerate where her affections and her employers are concerned, she does not behave well to her master's seared soldier-servant. Observe how she sends that pale, gaping, scurrying little man (Bravo! Mr. Chesney) to the rightabout.

A few minutes after the rise of the curtain we are in full possession of the situation, thanks to talk between "Nanny" and a young gentleman-farmer, Richard Llewellyn, who is evidently often in and out of the house and an intimate friend of its mistress. Both are anxious about Mrs. Wentworth, who has gone for the day to London. Three years have passed since Col. Wentworth, author and M.P., crashed in the Mediterranean and was reported missing; and she who had lived only in and for him, subordinating her own interests to his work and peace of mind, is still uncertain if it is more loyal to mourn as a widow or hope as a wife. The strain upon her has been dreadful. "When you feel really uneasy about her, tell me and I'll stand by you." Thus Richard; and "Nanny" wipes away a tear, saying gratefully (note this), "Do you know the Colonel never once spoke to me like that. He was . . ." Well, we gather he had been an aloof sort of man, very sure of himself and absorbed in his thoughts, his books, his purposes. Then a glance at the programme reveals the plot; near the bottom is, "Michael Wentworth." Of course, the "dead" man will return after his wife has given her heart to the living—probably to the young man we see before us. Opposite Wentworth's name is another too long absent from theatre programmes, that of Mr. Clive Brook, who proceeds to interpret wonderfully well far the most interesting character in the play; a figure that makes the old conflict, love versus loyalty, once more significant, and adds to it some topical reverberations.

Meanwhile, on the stage, Diana Wentworth has returned from London. She is not an interesting character. She is a simple, amiable, affectionate woman, naturally energetic and uncritical, who loves to feel herself useful and important. Miss Nora Swinburne supplies everything the part requires. Both she and Mr. Ronald Ward as Richard played with moving moderation and intelligence. She has been pining as much for an aim in life as for a husband. She now resolves that her mission shall be ".to carry on Michael's work"; she will stand for his constituency. Act II (some months have passed): she has proved as good a candidate as her friend the Cabinet Minister foresaw; the hero's widow floats to triumph on a spate of golden post-war optimism. Happiness breeds love, so steady Richard is made happy too. All is settled between them. Then comes the news that Michael Wentworth has returned, and she must go to meet him.

Between this act and the last we are asked to exercise imagination. Is it likely that Diana put up a very convincing show of ecstasy at Portsmouth? Remember Wentworth is a clever man. You will find when you see him he is quick enough, without saying much, at putting two and two together. But if these things are not recalled, and also that he is an emotionally exhausted man who, has for three years organised secretly resistance movements in Europe, has borne the well-nigh intolerable, he may seem merely a cynical egotist and an unpleasant foil to Richard. Wentworth suggests what planners may have to reckon with in many fighting men when they come home; namely, that exhortations to find henceforth their happiness in devotion to the future, may be met with, "The devil damn you black, I've given enough, I want some pleasure now." Peace is declared. Wentworth, when implored to help reconstruction in countries he knows to their depths, peremptorily refuses. Then, guessing at Richard's sacrifice, he says he too will behave well and consents. In the last words of the play Diana, M.P., is heard modifying her bright imperative pi-jaw bidding all to live for all. A better ending than a lover's union.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

RADIO NOTES

IT is but lately that the B.B.C. instituted its new policy of free discussion on controversial subjects, but it is not too soon to say that the policy has fully justified itself by some of its results. The series "To Start you Talking," for instance, now in full career, can and should be more useful than the Brains Trust, because its terms of reference are on each occasion more clear-cut and its participants more interested in getting at the truth, less preoccupied with putting up a good show and building up their radio personalities. Brains Trusts (whether broadcast or local) have become a national institution and to attack them is as priggish as attacking Itma. Where entertainment is paramount, Truth is only incidentally involved. Like the lawyers in *The Ring and the Book*, the Brains Trusters who stay the course for longest are those whose instinct for scoring prevails momentarily over their love of truth.

Of this more anon. The Brains Trust frightens nobody, because it cannot be serious. Talks, discussions and features constructed on different lines are more upsetting—as letters to the *Radio Times* alone testify—because they grasp more firmly the nettles now rank in what is no longer recognisably any kind of garden. But even now one notices a disinclination to face the fact, increasingly evident, that the assumptions on which European civilisation was built are now only believed in by a shrinking minority of people in the Western democracies. The Christian ethos may underlie what we do: it seldom has much effect on what we think. And when thought and

action cease to be truly integrated, some kind of revolution is in the offing.

This may or may not mean progress; in the year 0, it can be said to have meant that. As Louis MacNeice pointed out last week in *A Roman Holiday*, the Roman Empire was, at the time of the birth of Christ, sick and spiritually empty. Thought and action had—as now—disintegrated. What he did not go on to show was that it took Christianity rather more than three centuries to triumph. That is a long time, by human standards, and it suggests that if the Græco-Roman pantheon died so hard, when no one paid more than lip-service to it, Christianity may to-day have more kick left in it than totalitarians care to assume. But it is a very large—perhaps the largest—subject, and I could kill the author for treating it so perfunctorily. Mr. MacNeice is never dull, and his Roman portraits were amusing and representative, their talk was animated and to the point, the philosopher (Felix Aylmer) beautifully urbane and melancholy; but time (30 minutes) was up before the flute-playing slave had had time to do more than salute the possibility of the new faith and what it would mean to her and her like—to salute and stretch her arms towards those champions of Sex Equality who (had she but known it) climbed on to the air at 8.10 on the following evening.

The subject is magnificent, and Mr. MacNeice should be encouraged to treat it again and more exhaustively. We know a good deal about the Saturnalia—the only Roman holiday innocent of butchery—chiefly from the poem of Statius, who lived under the vile emperor Domitian. Statius was a sceptic and thought that the proper study of mankind was Man. As a poet he had his Browningesque, as well as his Miltonic moments, and would not—at that season of Peace and Good Will—have frowned on Mr. MacNeice's pathetic visionary slave, who plays the same catalytic part in his play as Pippa in the drama we heard the other day. And that, it seems, is the part of the true Christian character: an absolute, it resists the currents of change. Sublimely sure, it taught the Western world not to fear absolute standards: Truth, Beauty, Virtue (it said) are above discussion, once you have discovered them.

That Beauty is not relative, that some works of art are absolutely good and others absolutely bad, was the burden of Sir Kenneth Clark's inaugural talk in a series which started on January 12th. It would have been difficult, in twenty minutes, to put a good point better. I do not know who the other speakers are to be but this opening was most auspicious.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Waterloo Road," at the Leicester Square

"Sunday Dinner for a Soldier," at the Tivoli

"The Constant Nymph," at Warner's

So brief, so neat, so modest—I enjoy writing down those adjectives at a time when nearly every film I see is woollier and more pretentious than the one before. Last week's trio averaged two and three-quarter hours apiece, with almost every hour unmemorable, so that the eighty minutes of *Waterloo Road* seem in themselves an achievement. As a matter of fact, this piece has many merits, the chief of which (unknown until recently to English films) are speed and local colour. Have you explored the precincts of Waterloo? Life seems to press round it more closely, more individually than round any other London terminus. It is busy in the daytime, alive at night. For one thing the neighbourhood was there before the railway, which squeezes in over arches and along embankments. A stone's throw from the carriage window you will find a street market, where everything can be bought from whelks to second-hand finery; at one end of the New Cut people crowd into the Old Vic to see *Hamlet*, at the other The Ring with its dubious heroes lures an audience of a very different kidney, while somewhere between, in a steamy fish-shop window, you can see men and women gobbling up eels with a violence that would have tickled Rowlandson. Can? Could, of course, I ought to have written, for the war has banished all these long ago, flattened The Ring, gashed and rattled the houses. *Waterloo Road*, showing us a day in nineteen forty or forty-one, brings back the present. It has a good little story, that darts here and there through the neighbourhood, about a soldier's wife who almost takes up with a local bully—almost but not quite, for the soldier breaks camp to stop her. There are chases, of a new and lively kind for the screen, between husband and wife and lover, with the M.P.s at their back, and a doctor wagging his head over it all. Sidney Gilliat, who directed, has a flair for excitement, character and background—how well and inconspicuously he uses the railway, unfailing in its camera appeal. His comic touches, too, are individual. More than once the emotional preoccupation of his characters intrudes amusingly on the routine of others: an old gentleman loses his train because the inquiry girl puts family matters first; and there is a perfect little study of a fluttering bystander in a pin-table saloon who goes on with his game while three men hit another over the head with a jemmy not three yards away. *Waterloo Road* is lively both to the eye and the fancy, makes no pretences, and is true—so far as it goes—to life. John Mills, Stewart Granger and Ann Shelton are the stars of a cast that acts well all through. I could have done without the philosophic musings of Alistair Sim, but there are only two of them and they are brief.

Agreeably trim and lifelike, too, is *Sunday Dinner for a Soldier*, with its glimpses of ramshackle living on the Florida fringe. Empty beaches, palms, the motor road, the local bus from town, the derelict foundations of a dance hall, an inland lagoon with a family scraping along in an old houseboat: these form the setting of a touching domestic comedy in which a feckless grandfather (Charles Winninger), three children, a girl on the brink of marriage (Anne Baxter) and a soldier on leave (John Hodiak) play the leading parts. Direction by Lloyd Bacon good.

By contrast, *The Constant Nymph* is richly unlifelike, a best-seller all the way. First we get the Bohemians; they're musical (and what music!), they live in a Swiss chalet in scenery so unconvincing that even the sky has wrinkles, the old man drinks, the young men fall in love, the daughters of genius rush about barefoot with their hair down. Such rushings, you've no idea! Then to London and the damned bourgeois. They talk and live hosses, they drive in cars to the Row to ride in the pelting rain. They shy at the sight of a piano. Some of this is meant to be caricature and some isn't. Charles Boyer, as a composer who "has a melodic line which hasn't developed," seems quite at home marrying into the bourgeoisie until his barefoot Tessa (Joan Fontaine) turns up in school uniform. Well, probably you've read the book, and for those who haven't, I don't want to shake off all the dew. A nice triangle is worked up with everyone doing the right thing, including Boyer who has married the wrong girl. But then, Boyer is Boyer. I must admit that the emotional scenes towards the end are very capably and thrillingly done: Alexis Smith, as the wife, is a promising newcomer.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

WHY NOT TRUST THE TORIES?

SIR,—I was interested and amused by "Critic's" comment on Aneurin Bevan's brilliant—too brilliant—political pamphlet "Why Not Trust the Tories?" If the Tories have been guilty of such sustained and calculated deception why, I ask myself, have they been maintained in power by the electorate, practically without cessation, for over a quarter of a century? Is it because, after all, the majority of the people can be fooled all the time? It would appear to be the only explanation. But if this be so, it is a sad lookout for democracy.

Bevan certainly makes a formidable case against the Tory Party on coal. In the course of it he does less than justice to Churchill. In the autumn of 1926 the latter, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, made a desperate attempt to settle the strike on terms which would not involve the total defeat of the miners, and leave a permanent legacy of bitterness in the coalfields. He was prevented from doing so by Baldwin, who came back from Aix-les-Bains for this purpose.

In the event, Baldwin and the coalowners won. The miners were battered into total submission. And the weapons used were cold and starvation. To-day we reap where we have sown. But it is scarcely fair to blame Churchill.

For the rest, Bevan's arguments are more plausible than convincing. When all is said and done, 90 per cent. of the Beveridge Report has, on the admission of its author, been accepted by the Tory Party. It is the most ambitious and comprehensive scheme of social reform ever produced in this country. And it will be implemented. But, if it is to come to a general competition in past deception, what about the record of the Labour Party? I don't remember my Socialist opponent at the 1929 election informing the electors that, if a Labour Government was returned to office, it would cling to the gold standard at all and any cost; cut down loan expenditure; increase the Sinking Fund; abolish the Empire Marketing Board; cut down expenditure on health, agriculture, roads, education and afforestation; and reduce the pay of civil servants, teachers and the armed forces. If he had, I suspect my majority might have been bigger. Yet all these things were agreed to by the Labour Cabinet in 1931. It was only when their colleagues jibbed at cutting unemployment benefit that the Labour leaders went over in a body to the enemy rather than lose office. Thereafter their main political objective was the exclusion from office, at all and any cost, of their late followers, and of the only two men of authentic genius in our public life—Lloyd George and Churchill.

This seems to me to be more like betrayal than deception. You can hardly blame supporters of the Labour movement if they have not yet recovered from the shock. Nor can you blame the Tories for cashing in on the betrayal. As Bevan points out, politics is a form of war. But it says much for the resilience of the Tory Party that it should have been able to "carry" MacDonald for so long after he had become incapable of uttering a coherent sentence on any subject.

So far as subsequent events are concerned, only those who opposed the policy of appeasement in the country can realise the strength and volume of the support for Chamberlain right up to Munich, and beyond. If he had chosen to fight an election on this issue in 1938 he would—alas—have won by an immense majority. And there would have been no deception about it, for no one can doubt his sincerity.

I therefore submit, with all due deference, that, as an explanation of Tory success, the "technique of deception" is inadequate. I think I have found a clue in the agitated little discussion, on another page of your current issue, as to whether an alliance with Common Wealth might not help to win some "dormitory" seats for Labour.

Ten years have elapsed since Bertrand Russell wrote: "It is very doubtful whether, in an efficient modern State, the proletariat alone can hope to win the victory over capitalism. The capitalists, together with those who feel their interests at one with them, are not, as Marx supposed they would become, a small proportion of the population. Moreover, as things are now, they embrace the bulk of technical experts upon whom modern war depends" (Freedom and Organisation, p. 252).

Since then much water has flowed under the bridge. Economic power has passed from the hands of the property owners into those of the managers. The skilled worker is indistinguishable from the artisan. Can it be that the class which Marx designated the bourgeoisie now, contrary to his expectation, outnumbers "the mass of the Dispossessed"?

House of Commons. ROBERT BOOTHBY

GREECE

SIR,—Mr. Herbert Wood's letter in your current issue takes me to task for assuming "that it was consistent with loyal acceptance of the Caserta Agreement to plan a *coup d'état*, but inconsistent for Mr. Churchill to take steps to prevent it."

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This raises a matter of fact, whereas I had raised a matter of principle. My point was that it was dishonourable for our generals to trap E.A.M.-E.L.A.S. at Caserta into signing away control of their forces to us, when at Quebec we had already planned political intervention against them—on behalf of another section of opinion. Whether or not this intervention was justified by plans for an E.A.M. *coup* is irrelevant: the trap was and remained secret, and therefore dishonourable to us.

Now for the question of fact. Where is the evidence of this plan for a *coup*? It has never been produced. Mr. Churchill based his military intervention against the Belgian Resistance on the same grounds—and was immediately given the lie by two reputable British war correspondents on the spot—those of the *News Chronicle* and of *Reynolds News*.

Similarly, the evidence of the men on the spot in Greece is all against Mr. Churchill. M. Tsatsos, a Right-wing Liberal Minister in M. Papandreou's Government, toured the Peloponnesus prior to the Government's return in October. He found E.A.M. rule completely established everywhere—and also calm, order and reconstruction everywhere. As the *Observer* has pointed out, this, if ever, was the moment for a *coup* by E.A.M.-E.L.A.S. if it were intended. It did not occur—on the contrary, they welcomed the advent of the Government and ourselves.

The next witness is M. Papandreou himself. On September 28th he specifically exonerated E.A.M. of any intent to achieve a *coup*, and rebuked those who hinted at it. Meanwhile British correspondents were travelling in many parts of self-liberated Greece; each has recorded the moving welcome given to us by both people and E.A.M. leaders. If the latter planned a *coup*, would they not have organised suspicion and hostility to us?

Even Mr. Churchill contradicts himself. In September 1943 he praises the heroism and patriotism of the Greek Resistance. In August 1944 he plans at Quebec their suppression, because "for two years" they had allegedly been busier preparing civil war than fighting the invader. On December 8th he paints them in lurid colours in the House of Commons as "gangsters and bandits." Within little more than a fortnight he is seated round a table with them, addressing them once more as "comrades in the common struggle against the Nazi tyranny."

But Mr. Wood then asks me what I would say "if the Right had planned a similar seizure of power, and Mr. Churchill had failed to anticipate or frustrate it?" I would sharply condemn such an omission: indeed, I do so condemn it, for not only did he not frustrate the Right's *coup*, but actively aided it with British arms. And again, the evidence is quite plain.

It was M. Papandreou who, on November 27th, attacked "those who with incomprehensible thoughtlessness are daily pushing us towards civil war. Unfortunately, part of our ruling class condemns us for delaying the realisation of civil war." The Greek Premier himself, from inside knowledge, lays the blame squarely on the Right Wing—"our ruling class." When, acting under the orders of the Rump Government after E.A.M.'s resignation, the Athens ex-Quisling police fired for over an hour at an unarmed demonstration bearing the flags of the Allies, it was the *Times* correspondent who drew the conclusion: "The seeds of civil war were well and truly sown by the Athens police this morning."

Finally, one can sheet the guilt home quite conclusively. On November 28th, as M. Papandreou announced, all Greek parties had reached agreement on the method of disbanding the Right and Left-wing forces on an equitable basis. But such agreement wrecked the Quebec plan for military intervention against E.A.M., which Mr. Churchill has described to us since in detail. It was at this stage that General Scobie ordered the distribution throughout Greece by the R.A.F. of his "instructions," breaking the all-party agreement by disbanding the Left while leaving intact the "Regular" armed units of the Right. Those leaflets show, by textual evidence, that they were printed some time between November 19th and November 24th—that is, some days *before* the Greek parties reached agreement on demobilisation.

To torpedo the all-party agreement, therefore, Scobie resurrected an order that had been rendered obsolete by subsequent negotiations, and distributed it as orders from the Greek Government, thus committing the latter. The Right Wing then swung away from the all-party agreement to Scobie, driving E.A.M. into resignation; the next step was the street massacre, followed by Right terrorists' sniping at the mourning funeral processions, and then the open outbreak of civil war.

7A Fitzroy Square, ERIC COOK
London, W.1.

SIR,—The following two paragraphs which appeared consecutively in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 11th will be of interest to all who are anxious to get a true picture of what is happening in Greece to-day.

The Greek War Ministry has ordered the disbandment of remnants of the Right Wing (E.D.E.S.) forces which withdrew to Corfu from the Epirus because of E.L.A.S. attacks.

The War Ministry has called up for military service all persons of the 1934 to 1940 classes residing in Corfu.

Such reports can only lend weight to the E.A.M. claim that the Greek Government's avowed intention to disarm all factions—whether of the Right or Left—is insincere. It would seem clear that the Royalist forces in Corfu at least are simply being transferred into Government uniform and invested with Government authority.

In such circumstances, the doubts felt by democrats both in Greece and elsewhere about any ballot which may be held by the present Greek Government on the Monarchy issue are more than justified. The policy of this country should be to ensure that any such ballot takes place under the close supervision of an international commission upon which the three main Allies—The U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain—should be represented.

Basingstoke, P. L. C. FRYD
Hants.

CHINESE DEMOCRACY

SIR,—In the article "North China Front" in your issue of January 13th, you refer to President Chiang's promise to call a Representative Assembly before the end of the war and state: "Unless there is an important part of his speech unreported, he has not said when this body is to be set up, how it is to be constituted or what powers he intends it to possess." Perhaps I may be permitted to elaborate on these points.

1. President Chiang, in the speech to which you referred in your article, stated: "We must prepare for the convening of a People's Conference this year to promulgate a constitution. . . . I am ready to propose at once to the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang that, as soon as the military situation has become stabilised enough for us to launch counter-offensives with greater assurance of victory, we should convene a People's Congress."

2. At a press conference on January 3rd, Dr. P. H. Chang, Counsellor of the Executive Yuan, stated that there would be 1,200 delegates to the Assembly of which 654 are to be chosen on the basis of regional representation, 380 on occupational representation (i.e., farmers' unions, social services, labour unions, chambers of commerce, lawyers, doctors, accountants, professors and journalists), the rest being special delegates representing the four North-Eastern Provinces, Mongolia, Tibet and Overseas Chinese.

3. The Provisional Constitution of China promulgated on May 5th, 1936, states that "Delegates to the People's Congress shall be elected by universal, equal, and direct suffrage and by secret ballots. Citizens of the Republic of China having attained the

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JONATHAN CAPE

age of twenty years shall, in accordance with law, have the right to elect delegates."

4. The Provisional Constitution defines the functions of the People's Congress. These include the election of the President and the Vice President of the Republic and certain other offices, the power to initiate or hold referenda on laws and authority to amend the constitution.

SYDNEY D. BAILEY

4 Gordon Square, W.C.1

OUR RURAL DEMOCRACY

SIR,—Mr. Dark's distorted picture of rural democracy cannot go unchallenged, based as it is on observations within one rural district and then only during the wartime period. In his extract from the Report on Rural Housing he changes "a number" to "many," a rather different thing, but to be fair he should have quoted further, for example, "some (rural councils) have built a substantial number of new council houses; have been active in administering the powers designed to ensure that private property is kept in proper repair . . ." The rural councils' record is that during the inter-war years they have built 162,782 houses, an average of one for every 44 inhabitants. Remembering the declining population of rural England through the disastrous national agricultural policy, a very fair record, but applying this figure to Mr. Dark's council we see on what evidence he has based his conclusions, for with its population, to be an "average" rural district, it should have erected 477 houses; in fact it only erected 147. Apparently it is one of the backward few.

The criticism of part-time officers would be justified if it were a continuing practice, but few, if any, appointments to-day are made on this basis. It is probable that his M.O.H. is a full-time officer employed by a joint committee and precluded from private practice. Also he will be surprised to know that the Register of Electors, inevitably accurate, can be inspected at the local post office.

His parish and rural councils are criticised because they consist of the local squirearchy, but in authorities of all types unrepresentative councils are found. Just as there are some boroughs with substantial Socialist majorities so there are some parish and rural councils. Report of their meetings in the press cannot be controlled by them, but it must be remembered that stormy interludes, scandals and fracas have more news value than reports on solid and unspectacular progress.

The problems of representative rural government are admittedly difficult owing to the areas covered, but rural councils covering larger areas will not help in their solution. Representative councils can only be expected where the centres of administration are sufficiently near for workers, including working farmers and working women, to travel to evening meetings.

If Mr. Dark will make a more detailed study of rural government he will find that the hard core of undemocratic administration lies with the county councils; their areas of necessity have to be such that really accessible administrative centres are not possible. As most of their work is done in committees, often meeting as frequently as once a week, there is only a limited number of working men and women who are so placed that they can spare the time to become members, even when loss of wages and travelling expenses are refunded; so it is difficult to avoid them becoming either oligarchic or bureaucratic.

I am sorry to cross swords so completely with Mr. Dark, especially as I have no doubt that his object is the same as mine—a fully democratic form of local government for rural England. But this ideal will not be achieved by placing before the public an inaccurate picture based on unsound data, but rather by placing undistorted and unbiased facts before it, by providing a machine which the ordinary man and woman can understand and is in a position to work and by showing them how their welfare, and the welfare of their children, does to a large extent depend on their devoting some of their time and energy to making it work.

N. B.

SIR,—Sidney Dark's article on "Rural Democracy" draws very timely attention to a major problem of Socialist lack of organisation, especially in view of a coming General Election.

There is ground for hope that the Labour movement is awakening to the fact that time and money spent on backward areas are far from being wasted, but little sign that the true significance of the situation has been fully grasped.

Young and enthusiastic candidates are being sought for these Divisions, which is all to the good, but no candidate, however energetic, can contend alone with the practical difficulties in many of these areas. The chief of these is of course lack of funds, which engenders from the very beginning a frustrated and hopeless outlook in the local organisation. This is to be tackled to some extent at the next election, but what is also needed is practical help and guidance in the planning of campaigns where both money and talent are likely to be in short supply, so that the best possible job can be done even in apparently hopeless cases. The politically neglected areas are in fact a real key to Socialist power, and it is time for solidly constructive thinking in that direction.

Taking a long term view it would be well worth while to direct a special team of speakers armed with the right kind of literature to areas hitherto tacitly overlooked. Apart from immediate electoral results, the local organisations which have often carried on a bitter unrewarding struggle for many years would be tremendously encouraged and invigorated by at last receiving assistance from the outside world.

51, The Oval, W. Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

SYBIL PRINSKY

MAX PLOWMAN

SIR,—As one who worked with Max Plowman when he was General Secretary of the Peace Pledge Union, I should like to comment on your very sympathetic review of *Bridge into the Future*.

I do not believe that it is true to say that Max Plowman grew impatient with the organisation because it was held together by a slender basis of agreement; his impatience came from the growing tendency at that time to make the movement an orthodox political machine—his faith rested on *Persons*—in an organism instead of an organisation. His rapier-like wit attacked all humbug—inside or outside the P.P.U. Max Plowman believed it was possible to build a society of friends—bound together by the slender ties of the Peace Pledge and working creatively through individuals and small groups.

64 Ellerton Road, S.W.18

JOHN BARCLAY

IRISH CENSORSHIP

SIR,—The Censorship of Publications Act requires the Board to take into consideration "The literary, artistic, scientific or historic merit or importance, *and the general tenor*" of the book which is the subject of complaint. Elsewhere in the Act it is stated that prohibition may follow the decision of the Board that a book is "*in its general tendency* indecent or obscene." The word "indecent," according to the Act, "shall be construed as including suggestive of, or inciting to, sexual immorality or unnatural vice, or likely in any other similar way to corrupt or deprave."

Dissatisfaction with the censorship is due to the feeling that the general tendency of certain works has not been taken into consideration, but that they have been banned because of a single paragraph, or even a single line. From a legal standpoint it would seem that the Act does not apply to such works, but that it has been misapplied to them.

One does not, for example, make the assumption that Critic because of the startling irrelevance of his reference in this connection to the Papal Index, is altogether a bigot.

Dalkey, Co. Dublin.

D. J. GILTINAN

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BERNARD SHAW

in the January *Writer*, but the demand far exceeded the supply, with the result that only subscribers and early visitors to the bookstalls obtained their copies. One consolation, however, we can offer to readers. If the necessary precautions are taken to safeguard a copy of the February issue, every writer will revel in

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

When Edith Wharton was eleven years old she showed her first attempt at a novel to her mother. It began:

"Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Brown?" said Mrs. Tompkins, "if only I had known you were going to call I should have tidied up the drawing-room."

Judgment came at once. The voice of the 'Seventies—the voice of Old New York—spoke for an oligarchy in the single comment: "Drawing-rooms are always tidy."

Mrs. Wharton's parents belonged to the merchant aristocracy that established itself in America during the eighteenth century. Wealthy, exclusive and socially autocratic, they had long accepted a way of life and an attitude of mind that admitted of no departure from their rules of good breeding and conventional taste; it was therefore to be expected that the drawing-room should become the scene of her maturer inspration; she is an expert on its inhabitants, *decor* and manners: her manipulation of its *dramatis personae* is so unobtrusive that only repeated study reveals them (with one or two remarkable exceptions) as gorgeous dolls, a little under life-size.

Mrs. Wharton was not a genius: she was an extremely competent professional novelist; and her work is as far removed from the depths and heights of great fiction as it is from the wispy and tremulous projections that are apt to characterise the amateur and the beginner. During a prosperous literary career of nearly forty years she never rose above and seldom deviated from the standards of acuteness, common sense and inventive power which gained her a reputation which is now somewhat diminished. If her creatures are only dolls, they are at least cleverly animated and admirably controlled; for Mrs. Wharton is ruthless as well as intuitive; unafraid, at her worst, of sentimentality, and at her best distilling a poignancy and a force of characterisation a little at variance with the planned orderliness of treatment that the freezing ineptitude of that first criticism may have imposed. It is permissible to imagine, in view of what she has written of her early influences in *A Backward Glance* (1934), that the standards of her mother's enclosed and privileged world informed her choice in the construction though not in the psychology of her novels; hence the rich but severe patterns, the neat unfolding of plots which subordinate rather than derive from their principal figures.

The fastidious rigidity that was the concomitant of those early standards never quite deserted her. It ran through much of her work: it braced her during an unlucky marriage, it stiffened her resistance to the rulers of her youth; when she left America it enabled her to take and hold a position in the more involute microcosm of the French aristocracy; it purified and co-ordinated an intelligence that might have become ponderous and over-documented. And last of all, it gave her the resilience necessary for a high intellectual adventure—her long friendship with Henry James; she played Mrs. Thrale to his Dr. Johnson with the ease of the subtle and ingenious *dompteuse*. She was fond of him, of course: her reverence was deep and sincere: but one feels that she only pretended to shrink when the huge creature grumbled and growled and roared; she knew herself his equal in matters of knowledge and taste. Seeing her dwarfed in that vast shadow, we must recall how paradoxical the professional relationship became; for it was she, the most eclectic, cultured and critical of expatriates, who picked up the discarded pieces of his European-American saga and from them made a series of compositions of her own, in the French manner.

New York scaffoldings for Parisian structures—what was the result? *The Custom of the Country* (1913) is one of the best examples of Mrs. Wharton's formal treatment of a theme. The heroine is called Undine Spragg and is radiantly beautiful. Having thus assumed the mask of comedy, the author speaks from behind it in the following passage. Ralph Marvell, in love with Undine, is talking to her mother.

> . . . with a smile and echoes of *divers et ondoyant* in his brain, (he) repeated her daughter's name after her, saying, "It's a wonderful find—how could you tell it would be such a fit?"—it came to her quite easily to answer, "Why, we called her after a hair-waver father put on the market the week after she was born—" and then to explain, as he remained struck and silent, "It's from *un*doolay, you know, the French for crimping; father always thought the name made it take. He was quite a scholar and had the greatest gift for finding names. I remember the night he invented his Goliath Glue he sat up all night over the Bible . . . No, father didn't start *in* as a druggist . . . he was educated for an undertaker. . . ."

Undine Spragg soars above the subsidiary characters, a monster of cruelty, snobbishness and greed; she seems to move beneath a throbbing electric glare from New York to Europe and back again. Her marriage with the poetical Mr. Marvell trails off at last into divorce; but this enfeebled victim must still be bled and tortured, for in order to buy back his son, whom the courts have given to Undine, he is compelled to invest money under the direction of Elmer Moffatt, a former acquaintance of his wife's.

> Moffatt . . . was scrutinizing him through half-shut lids. "No," he said slowly, "I don't believe Undine Spragg'll take a cent less."
>
> Ralph felt himself whiten . . . He said to himself, "Keep your temper—keep your temper—" and his anger suddenly boiled over.
>
> "Look here, Moffatt," he said, getting to his feet, "the fact that I've been divorced from Mrs. Marvell doesn't authorise anyone to take that tone in speaking to me of her."
>
> Moffatt met the challenge with a calm stare under which there were dawning signs of surprise and interest. "That so? Well, if that's the case, I presume I ought to feel the same way; I've been divorced from her myself."

Disillusionment and misery, coupled with the knowledge that he cannot raise enough money in time to get back the boy, drive Ralph to suicide and Undine marries the French aristocrat for whom she has been angling; but her discontent renews itself as she battles her way through the intricacies of custom and tradition in the Faubourg, till at last, revolted by the poverty and pride that combine in whittling down her standards, she also appeals to Moffatt, who is now a millionaire.

The scene in which these two settle their future and define their relationship is one of extraordinary insight and originality. Most authors would have been content to make Moffat a coarse, uninteresting climber, fit partner for the companion of his one escapade; Mrs. Wharton gives him a queer charm, in that he alone of all her circle sees Undine clearly, yet with humour and affection; he expects nothing of her; but we understand why he wants her, why he always has wanted her: the glittering worthless creature is after all worth possessing. She returns with Moffatt to America where she obtains her second divorce; they re-marry and come back to Fifth Avenue on a wave of publicity. So the encircling structure is complete, and the final paragraph outlines the central figure with a last flick of the lash.

> But under all the dazzle a tiny black cloud remained. She had learned that there was something she could never get, something that neither beauty nor influence nor millions could ever buy for her. She could never be an Ambassador's wife; and as she advanced to welcome her first guests she told herself that it was the one part she was really made for.

Mrs. Wharton first became celebrated with the publication of *The House of Mirth* (1905) a study of rich New York society. Recalling this book in 1936, the author is mildly satirical at the expense of the conventions then obtaining, which enabled her heroine to be compromised by taking tea unchaperoned in a man's rooms; she seems to deprecate the arid freedom which now stretches before the inventor of literary situations. But those who read *The Children* (1936) may observe that she has lost none of her mastery in dealing with contemporary wealth and fashion; her portrayal of a pseudo-cosmopolitan, "Lido" world is similar in its cool yet frightening irony; her arrangements of surprise and contrast are as technically perfect as in the nineteen-hundreds. Her sense of what is most typical is best expressed in dialogue; and although there is the gap of a generation between the two books, the conversations in the second follow on from the first with only a different set of obsessions and a faint blurring of the metallic idiom to mark the passage of time. The talk in the earlier novel is mainly confined to divorce, scandal and bridge debts; we hear nothing of the children of the talkers, for of course they are packed away in a nursery wing; thirty years later they have become the victims of a complicated marital exchange and mart, divorce being taken for granted; if one or two are destroyed in the process, that is by the way—the really smart woman is now nothing if not maternal; but the change of interests has affected neither her egoism nor her stupidity.

Between 1911 and 1917 Edith Wharton wrote three short novels of working-class life—*Ethan Frome*, *Bunner Sisters* and *Summer*—as if to show that her range was deeper and wider than her critics believed. Of these three, *Ethan Frome* has become a minor classic; but surely Mr. Edmund Wilson is right in placing *Bunner Sisters* beside or even above the better known story; its stunned hopelessness remains, a dead weight in the memory, long after the abrupt horror of *Ethan Frome* and the stricken idyll of *Summer* have ceased to haunt and depress. These studies of what Mrs. Wharton's compatriots call the under-privileged are absolutely convincing; there is no record of their veracity having been impugned at any time. It is therefore all the more interesting to recall that the author seems to have made no attempt to "soak" herself in the lives of her protagonists; she informs us that the years spent on her property in their neighbourhood and a number of discussions with the local pastor supplied her with the material she needed. The traditions of her upbringing forbade an intimate or direct approach to these people, just as it decreed a pleasant yet formalised relationship with all her dependants; intuition and technical equipment did the rest—so much for the self-immolation supposedly required for a report on that other world whose background and inhabitants she set herself to describe. Three years later she produced an exquisite, almost too faultless historical novel of upper-class New York in the Eighteen-Seventies. *The Age of Innocence* is a perfect achievement, its satire as delicate as its colouring; transparent yet vital, the narrative seems to enclose the reader in a miniature hot-house, whose scentless blooms are just about to fade.

In her later work this author's irony and slyness sometimes broadened into farce, the result of an increasingly emphasised withdrawal; the more biased, acid mockery of her earlier attitude produced such passages as the following:

> . . . the Harvey Shallums, fresh from Paris and dragging in their wake a bewildered nobleman, vaguely designated as "the Count," who offered cautious conversational openings, like an explorer trying beads on savages. (*The Custom of the Country.*)

Neither her range, nor her culture—which was formidable—nor even her fecund and finely directed imaginative powers raise Edith Wharton above the mass of successful novelists of her day; it is by the outmoded qualities of self-effacement and a sense of form that she is most likely to be remembered. Her dispassionate yet confident approach generally induces a submissive frame of mind; then we are led through a series of coldly lit, brilliantly decorated interiors: the dolls are taken out of their gilt boxes and manipulated by invisible hands; they move and speak; we listen and believe. And when the show is over dolls, scenery, lighting all crumble into dust; for an hour or two we have been entertained, no more.

HESTER W. L. CHAPMAN

THE ANALYST AS REFORMER

Man and His Fellow Men. Modern Chapters on Social Psychology. By SAMUEL LOWY. *Kegan Paul.* 15*s.*

Dr. Lowy is the author of a book on dream interpretation which has been rated very highly indeed by those qualified to judge. In the present volume he turns from the individual to society, and considers how personal maladjustments may affect public and national life. The aggressive boss or official, the over-anxious civil servant, the gangster, the sit-down worker, the delaying elderly politician, the world conqueror: these are plainly manifestations of a more or less neurotic origin. The tyrant, if he could be persuaded into a consulting room, would reveal an unhappy childhood; but he is the product also of a society which, having failed to educate him, has encouraged his excesses. Where a whole people, as in Germany, has adopted the symptoms of psychopathic behaviour, we are willing enough to recognise the pattern; we congratulate ourselves on being different, and leave it at that.

The object of *Man and his Fellow Men* is to apply to a normal society (our own) the same rigid standards of analysis. What is normality? Dr. Lowy's answer, based on his experience as a general physician, may surprise the reader. Here is his picture of the "normal" marriage among people who have never sought clinical advice. Of a hundred average families with whom he was in fairly close contact he judges that one-third had achieved an "adequate mutual adaptation"; one-third had developed definitely anti-social traits which were curable; one-third were beyond any easy restoration of normality. The children of the last two groups would be likely to grow up worse than their parents. So much (assuming that these proportions are even approximately true) for normality in marriage. And in working life, politics, national behaviour, the picture, one may assume, would not be radically different.

But we are reluctant, the further we get away from the individual, to admit any kind of realistic criticism. "My country, my class, right or wrong" is still a fairly respectable attitude held by persons who would hesitate to say "Myself at all costs." Injustice and inaction may be recognised as such, so long as the motives and behaviour of the society that produces them are not too deeply probed. In the years between the wars we acquiesced that national muddle should set the seal on private unhappiness; we *were* that muddle; doles and movies offered the only salve; the war came like the shock treatment administered to a depressed and mentally inert patient. More than once Dr. Lowy insists that the reluctance to make reforms on which everyone, more or less, has agreed is neurotic in origin, and that social reform in itself, without a more enlightened education, can do comparatively little to change human lives. He sees society as the reflection and echo of individual feelings; accepts Bentham's view of the State as provider for the greatest happiness of the greatest number. This, in refreshing contrast to the Marxian diagnosis, begins by accepting human idiosyncrasy and aims at increasing its satisfactions. To be adaptable and efficient in one's own sphere is to be happy.

Necessarily, with such an approach, we learn more in Dr. Lowy's pages of the State's duty to the individual than of the individual's duty to the State. An incompetent and dissatisfied citizen cannot be expected to act otherwise than as he does; improve his surroundings, take away the obvious rubs, provide him with a critical education and automatically he will be better governed. But what is the State that is providentially to bestow on its citizens a new insight into human behaviour and motive? Mr. Herbert Read, in an introduction, pertinently asks this question, and Dr. Lowy in a number of the chapters that follow attempts to answer it. That psycho-analysis does possess a knowledge capable of revolutionising politics, if the analysts and the politicians could find common ground, seems to me unquestionable. At present that knowledge is almost wholly employed in the treatment of a few hardened cases, where it might be put to the uses of a general preventive education. Mr. Read asks how such an education could be achieved, and rejects the vision of thousands of analysts giving thousands of talks to little citizens. This hardly does justice to Dr. Lowy, who foresees a percolation of new knowledge by various means, including books such as the one he has written. Though a practising analyst, he writes for the general reader in easily understood terms; he hopes also to lure his fellow-analysts into more popular fields. There are prejudices to be broken down on both sides, the expert's and the common man's. The reader of *Man and his Fellow Men* will find its author wise, critical and humane in an unusual degree; and more cautious in generalisation than perhaps this review has suggested. He argues realistically for Utopia. Much of his detail is fascinating. While treating cases of paranoia, for example, he made the discovery that anti-Semitism is rarely ingrained, but that in free association it gives way to an underlying hatred, usually of near relatives. Dr. Lowy is himself a Jew and this experience was confirmed by other analysts.

G. W. STONIER

A HISTORY OF GERMANY?

A Short History of Germany. By S. H. STEINBERG. *Cambridge University Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

I suppose the purpose of this volume was to provide the English reader with a reliable up-to-date text-book. As far as facts and dates are concerned Mr. Steinberg is a reliable and conscientious guide. But whether it is justifiable to call this book "a history" of Germany is a different question. Mr. Steinberg uses a method which, one would think, is after Lamprecht, Elie Halévy, and Professor Trevelyan pretty well antiquated. He writes solid "political" history in the narrowest sense of the word.

Facts and dates may give a pragmatic framework of the history of Germany, but they do not explain the problems which German history presents, and it is the *problems* in which students and teachers alike are interested. A history of Germany—even a short one—needs a careful interpretation of constitutional history, of the legal system, of art, literature, religion, and last but not least of economic history. All this is hardly, if at all, touched upon.

Only in the introduction Mr. Steinberg makes an attempt to indicate a general framework for an understanding of German history. "The history of the Germanies," writes Mr. Steinberg,

> is the history of the unending struggle of the continental Teutons for a working compromise between uniformity and disruption. Uniformity was and is contrary to the racial, cultural and political divergency of the Germanic tribes; the complete independence of each part would have been and will be contrary to the economic, cultural and political interests of those very parts. At no time was one central power strong enough to crush the centrifugal tendencies of the component elements. At no time were the component sections weak enough to let themselves be merged into one body politic. The main problem of German history is very similar to that with which the League of Nations was confronted, namely, to find a working compromise between centralism and anarchy. What the League failed to achieve in twenty years, the Germanies have not been able to achieve in a millennium.

The analogy with the League of Nations is, in my opinion, entirely misleading. The League was an attempt of politically independent State units to collaborate in questions of common concern; the German tribes or federal States were since Bismarck never independent in this sense. What remains to-day of tribalism or federalism in Germany is essentially not different from the regionalism of Normandy in France, or Wales in England. Mr. Steinberg revives a federal debate which is not of more than superficial interest. Federalism is not a fitting key to an understanding of the history of Germany. Constantin Frantz was already dead long before he died. He cannot be revived in 1944.

Wherever Mr. Steinberg should provide us with a satisfactory interpretation of the deeper motivation of the historical process, he leaves the reader guessing. Thus he observes:

> The chief effect of the Reformation upon the political and constitutional development of the Empire was the further consolidation of the power of the princes . . . The State now took away the financial means by which the Church had maintained schools, infirmaries and asylums; it became therefore inevitable that the State should take charge of the respective responsibilities as well. The bureaucracy, which during the last generations had everywhere taken control of public administration, eagerly seized this opportunity to extend the sphere of State interferences. The officials, who had been brought up on the revived Roman law, fully endorsed its conception of the omnipotence of the State. The Protestant rulers were even able to cloak their sovereignty with the semblance of Divine right. They made themselves the supreme heads of the newly established Churches of their respective territories and thus represented both God and the State to their subjects. This co-ordination, almost identification, of "throne and altar" has remained a characteristic feature of German public life ever since. Once the Christian justification (or its pretext) was thrown overboard, the naked deification of the State as proclaimed by the National Socialists was the inevitable result.

This is undoubtedly correct. Yet the reader might like to know to what extent Luther's theology has furthered this development. Without an analysis of the specific religious doctrine of Lutheranism German history must remain enigmatic.

To give another example of Mr. Steinberg's "method." He tries to explain the capitulation of the German people to Nazism in 1933.

> Of greater importance . . . than the attitude of the organised parties was that of the unorganised masses of the bourgeoisie. The main reason which drove millions of middle-class voters without fixed party loyalties into the National Socialist camp, and made some more millions tacitly bow to the new regime, can be tracked back to the unprecedented upheaval of inflation and mass-unemployment. These created an atmosphere of hopelessness and panic, which made people frantically look round for any "movement," any programme, and any leader promising to give them economic security, to restore to them social stability, and to relieve them from making their own choice.

Here the term "bourgeoisie" or "middle class" is again quite inadequate. The bourgeoisie in Germany was already declining in 1920, and "the millions of middle class voters" were predominantly those social groups which German sociologists had termed *Mittelschichten* i.e., groups in between bourgeoisie and proletariat. Mr. Steinberg's class differentiations are much too crude.

I have only given examples of the author's methodological inadequacies. His book is a sober and diligently knit chain of facts and dates—no more.

J. P. MAYER

STEELE THE POLITICIAN

Tracts and Pamphlets by Richard Steele. Edited with Notes and Commentary by RAE BLANCHARD. The *Johns Hopkins Press* and *Oxford University Press.* 27*s.* 6*d.*

Of the thirty-three items in this book only one has been reprinted since the eighteenth century; yet the editor's recommendation—"on the whole, they make rather thoughtful reading even now"—need deter nobody but the idlest general reader. For this collection, with short factual introductions to each piece, makes an excellent source-book for the history of a time in which politics and literature were very closely interlinked, a time in which the intricate relations of personalities may obscure the value of what people did or wrote.

Here is a working journalist of great talent (Steele never wrote a full-length book), moulding styles, sorting and testing forms of publication to meet an uncertain but growing public demand.

The major distinctions of modern journalism were still unmade. There was no clear line between editor and contributor: as official Gazetteer Steele wrote the whole of each number himself, "without ever erring against the rule observed by all Ministries, to keep that paper very innocent and very insipid." In the early *Tatler*, which claimed at first to be a newspaper, the difference between fact and opinion is not clearly marked; news often arrived first in the form of gossip. A paper had no normal expectation of life; many of Steele's periodicals were in effect pamphlets published in parts—*The Plebeian* had only four numbers, all of which concerned nothing but the Peerage Bill; *The Spinster* died after No. 1. The marvel is not that the *Tatler* and *Spectator* were dropped so arbitrarily when their conductors tired of them, but that they ever ran so long.

Journalism was highly personal even when it was anonymous; Steele's work at its best has the effect of good talk organised into print. Yet these reprints show how in his purely political writing he was struggling towards a more impersonal statement of a case; his matter is then ill-organised, his style often clumsy, but he has the great virtue of keeping his eye on the measures rather than on the men. Compare his pamphlet *The Crisis* (1714) with Swift's answer to it, *The Public Spirit of the Whigs*. Steele is entirely taken up with long quotations from Acts of Parliament punctuated and rounded off with statements of Whig principle about the Hanoverian succession. Swift answers ferociously *ad hominem*, twisting every sentence, mangling the whole of Steele's career. Steele, he said, was obliging "his party with a very awkward pamphleteer in the room of an excellent Droll." Swift was far abler, far more entertaining; but Steele in the *Crisis* was trying to do the harder and rarer job.

It would be a good and painful exercise in the tangled history of Queen Anne's reign to try to explain shortly and simply the essence of Swift's politics; yet Steele's Whiggery, as it appears in these pamphlets, is clear, consistent and simple. William III was his next example after St. Paul of a Christian Hero; he believed the monarchy must be based on consent rather than on purely hereditary right; he suspected a large section of the Tory Party of covert Jacobitism; he outlined the theory of balance between King, Lords and Commons (the Peerage Bill tended to oligarchy), which later became the orthodox Whig doctrine of the Constitution. His career as a party writer was clean compared with Defoe's and free compared with Swift's.

The consistent, rather pompous politician of this book would hardly be recognisable as Thackeray's generous, wayward, improvident, tipsy essayist, but for the inclusion of his *Account of the Fish-Pool*, a vessel "built for the Importation of Fish alive, and in good Health, from parts however distant." This one pamphlet fits perfectly—in its subject, its presentation and its failure—the alchemy, the bailiffs, the taverns, the guineas and packets of tea for Prue. Optimistic, volatile, eager to seize what every occasion offered, ready to try everything once and damn the consequences, Steele was an Inventor in letters rather than a literary man, just as likely to produce a crazy contraption of string and wire as a working model of something new. The uncertainties and anomalies in the journalism and society of his time exactly suited his temperament. In his shorter papers he could maintain an excellent simple prose for moralising, narrative and description; in his sober public moods he aimed at another style of journalism, for which he had no exact precedent, severe, organised, impersonal argument, overreaching both his own abilities and the standards of his time. He deserves this book as surely as he deserved his knighthood from George I.

HUMPHRY HOUSE

NEW NOVELS

Dasha. By E. M. ALMEDINGEN. *John Lane.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Liana. By MARTHA GELLHORN. *Home and Van Thal.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Blue Angel. By HEINRICH MANN. *Hutchinson's International Authors.* 6*s.*

Of no country are the ordinary details of life less known to the average English reader than of modern Russia. As I am among the ignorant, Miss Almedingen's *Dasha* had for me an extraneous fascination—an attraction unconnected with strict merit—in that it shows people in Russia attending to the day-to-day business of housekeeping, shopping, travelling, earning money, making friends and so on. It is a sequel to Miss Almedingen's *Frossia*. Dasha, who was a crippled half-starved child in the revolutionary days, is now a young woman with red hair and a talent for sculpture, seeking her way in the world. Gleb, once one of the wild boys whose reclamation was one of the early psychiatric achievements of the Soviet State, is a university lecturer and a poet. This is the Soviet Russia of the late Nineteen-Thirties, recovering from her wounds and finding that there is at last enough food, a chance of relative comfort and occasional luxury, a little time to spare for relaxation and leisure; but bracing herself at the same time, though incredulously, against a new catastrophe preparing in the West. Is the picture true? It hangs together, it has an air of reality, and the people are flesh and blood. Of its accuracy as a social document I would not care to judge.

The story of Dasha has no particular structure or dramatic cohesion. It is sentimentally told, and not without an occasional crudity of taste or solecism of language. But it is told with an intimacy, a softness and sweetness that quickly persuade into acceptance. Speech and thought among its characters fluctuate between the sentimental and the truly poetical, but are always on the plane of feeling rather than on the plane of logic. The materialist approach is referred to now and then, obliquely, as a kind of moral duty, acknowledged but not inescapable. *Dasha* is pleasurable reading.

The war irrupts into *Dasha*, decisively but from the outside, with equal irrelevance and finality, blotting out the life and the hopes we have watched unfold. To Miss Gellhorn's *Liana* the war is a grumbling background. Neither is a war book except in so far as the writer is inhibited to-day from treating of the contemporary scene without relation to war. *Liana* is the story of a beautiful mulatto girl on a Caribbean island who marries, without love, a rich French colonist. Thereupon, an idle, unloved, sensitive, expensively groomed and lonely wife, she finds herself cut off equally from the tedious sociability of the whites and the squalid companionable life of the negroes. Her husband is an indelicate middle-aged man with two interesting qualities: an unpredictable intellectual tolerance, and a fertility in business enterprise from which develops an unexpected display of public-spirited energy under the economic pressure of the distant war. Neither of these qualities has any entertainment value for Liana. When a young teacher from France, a stranger to the island, treats her as a friend she falls in love with him.

All this is beautifully narrated with a vivid simplicity of language and a sense for the telling physical or psychological detail which make Miss Gellhorn potentially a first-class writer of fiction. In relating the love affair that follows Miss Gellhorn succeeds in conveying that heightened perception of physical surroundings—colour, form, texture and movement—which sexual love can induce. It ends in the death of Liana—one

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4 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

BARCLAYS BANK
LIMITED

EDWIN FISHER, Chairman.
SIR WILLIAM MACNAMARA GOODENOUGH, Bart. } Deputy Chairmen.
HUGH EXTON SEEBOHM }
WALTER OSBORNE STEVENSON, Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: A. W. TUKE, F. C. ELLERTON.
General Manager (Staff): C. FITZHERBERT.

Statement of Accounts
31st December, 1944

LIABILITIES

	£	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts	903,149,116	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	14,626,444	
		917,775,560
Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc., for account of Customers		15,092,928
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		11,250,000

ASSETS

Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England		95,556,206
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		35,848,891
Money at Call and Short Notice		24,330,350
Bills Discounted		30,665,283
Treasury Deposit Receipts		368,000,000
Investments		217,340,641
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, *less* amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—£1,242,394 12s 6d. Stock		3,727,184
Other Banks—(including fully paid Stock and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each, £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		2,494,502
Advances:—Customers and other Accounts	158,371,731	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	626,516	
		158,998,247
Liability of Customers for Acceptances, Guarantees, Indemnities, etc.		15,092,928
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off)		7,922,553

Head Office: 54, LOMBARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.3

would say inevitably, for the lovely mulatto has clearly been spoiled for one life and has little chance of making another. But there is no inevitability about it, and if one looks more closely to inquire why, one sees also why this novel, though good, is not excellent. These characters, though acutely perceived in detail and at isolated moments, are without continuity. What Liana, or her lover Pierre, or her husband Marc, does or thinks on page 171 has no roots in what he did or thought on page 134.

Compare another treatment of the same general theme, Mr. Somerset Maugham's story *The Pool*. In *Liana* there is not the same deliberate collection and collation of facts, nor the cool, clear, reflective narration; one does not complain of that. But examine the structure and sequence of the Maugham story which proceeds with probability and coherence, from lucidly stated cause to calmly observed effect. The sequence of events in Miss Gellhorn's novel is not intrinsically more improbable: on the contrary; but it is not perceptibly related to character. To make such a comparison, however, is to admit that *Liana* is a good novel.

Heinrich Mann's *The Blue Angel* (republished in Viola Garvin's translation) is best known to most English people, I suppose, through the film that made Marlene Dietrich famous and occasioned a great acting performance by the often deplorable Herr Jannings. The film was a simplification—the straightforward plot of an old schoolmaster's lust for a tawdry singer, his infatuation with a world strange to him, his pathetic and ludicrous fall. Old Mud in the novel is a more formidable proposition, his downward progress impelled not only by Indian Summer stirrings but by hatred for his generic enemy, the schoolboy, his cup of humiliation sweetened and his sclerotic heart consoled by the spread of corruption and ruin around him. Old Mud hates the hatred which his passionate championship of discipline has earned him; he turns anarch in revenge. It is a story possessing singular unity of theme. Based on the more repulsive depths of character of an unpalatable type of human being, it is made readable and even entertaining by a matter-of-fact treatment confining itself, in statement, to common human terms.

Like so many stories of German school life, *The Blue Angel* shows in action the interbreeding of discipline and neurosis and hammers home, to a reader in these days, the relation between the German educational scene and German political behaviour. But that is incidental to its qualities as a novel.

JOHN MIDGLEY

TWO ENGLISH PAINTERS

Matthew Smith. By PHILIP HENDY.
John Piper. By JOHN BETJEMAN. *Penguin Books.* 2s. 6d. *each.*

Mr. Matthew Smith's reputation, which is second to none among living English painters, rests chiefly on the magnificent luminosity he gives to his colour; unluckily the colour-process used in the admirable Penguin Modern Painters series is not able to render this effectively. The reproductions therefore, while they provide useful reminders, cannot be expected to convince those who do not already know Mr. Smith's work. Mr. Philip Hendy's introduction is informative, appreciative and illuminating. He reveals that Matthew Smith was born in 1879 at Halifax, and was sent at the age of eighteen to the family wire works. By "persevering inefficiency" in this job he escaped to the Manchester School of Art; and then in 1910 joined the school that Matisse ran for a short while in Paris. His early pictures painted under the influence of Matisse are considered by some judges to rank with his best work. Later he lived much in Provence, and, as Mr. Hendy points out, even the landscape and Still Lifes executed in England are "bathed in the strong light of his adopted land." Mr. Hendy reveals some interesting information about the artist's character:

> Some men in their persons and their lives are just like their art, which seems to be only an expression of their personality. Smith is of the opposite kind. Spare and shy and self-deprecatory, he puts into his painting, I should say, the things which nature has not given him. His art is complementary to himself.

Mr. Smith's decisiveness in attack has rightly earned for him a place apart from his English contemporaries; but it may be thought that he has the "défauts de ses qualités": these rutilant colours are applied in brush strokes that provide an often coarse and insensitive texture, and one cannot derive from peering into his pictures the sensuous satisfaction one gets from close contact with the equally violent pictures of Matisse and Rouault. It is a pity that this excellent study does not include any reproductions of Mr. Smith's drawings.

The colour reproductions in the book on John Piper are happier, but Mr. Betjeman is far below his usual level in the text. One does not feel that he cares greatly for painting or has ever thought very much about the subject. So he evades the issue with rather private little pleasantries about Mr. Piper's origins. He throws little light on the extraordinary revolution that transformed Mr. Piper from the most austere of abstract painters to a very sensuous and romantic painter. But he makes one interesting comment:

> Some have supposed that when he paints a black sky—as in some of the Windsor water-colours—it indicates a desire to create the effect of a storm. Far more it indicates a desire to show up the colour of the stone or the trees or the houses in the picture.

Perhaps the two desires exist side by side. I do not think one can dismiss quite so easily the Romantic Revival, Mrs. Radcliffe, side of these pictures.

Mr. Piper is aged only forty-one, and there is every reason to expect from him most interesting developments. He obviously is gifted with an enviable facility—but only in execution. He has been a slow starter, and likes to exhaust one vein before looking for another. In his present period he is expressing most valuably his sensibility to English architecture, and such water-colours as *Fotheringhay Church* and *The Stone Court at Knole* and *Farmyard Chapel near Launceston* stand high in the fine tradition of English topographical drawing.

ROGER MARVELL

Four Colonial Questions. *Fabian Society.* 2s.

This pamphlet consists of four essays, each written by an authority on the territory in question, which discuss the future status and problems of the African colonies and protectorates and of Burma and Malaya. Colonel Gore-Brown, who has been a member of the Northern Rhodesia Legislature, argues against the complete amalgamation of Southern Rhodesia with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland; Dr. Rita Hinden discusses the proposals for a union of the East African territories; Mr. Greenidge examines the relation of the South African Protectorates to the Union; and Mr. Dodd provides the essential facts upon which future policy in Malaya and Burma must be based. These essays are a sober and informative introduction to problems which are too little discussed in Britain.

The Political Quarterly. JANUARY–MARCH. *Macmillan.* 5s.

Three articles in this latest issue are of particular interest to students of the Coalition's domestic policy. H. S. Shelton discusses the application of the religious clauses in the new Education Act, showing some of the difficulties that arise from the agreed syllabuses for theological instruction; Joan Clarke examines the Government's Social Insurance proposals;

Company Meeting

BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED

RECORD FIGURES

POST-WAR PROBLEMS

MR. EDWIN FISHER'S STATEMENT

The 50th ordinary general meeting of Barclays Bank Ltd. will be held at the head office, 54, Lombard Street, E.C., on Jan. 24 next.

The following is an extract from the statement of Mr. EDWIN FISHER, the Chairman, which was circulated with the report:

At the close of 1944, our current, deposit and other accounts stood at the record high level of £917,775,560, against £822,499,871 at the end of the previous year. Our cash in hand and with the Bank of England; balances with other British banks and cheques in course of collection; money at call and short notice; bills discounted, and Treasury Deposit Receipts reached a total at the end of last year of £554,400,650, or 60.4 per cent. of our current deposit and other accounts. Treasury Deposit Receipts are £77 million higher than at the end of 1943, and our holdings of Treasury bills and money at call and short notice are also somewhat larger.

The rise in our investments, excluding those in subsidiary banks, from £216,391,769 to £217,340,642, is much smaller than in any year since 1939, but our advances have declined further to £158,998,247 on Dec. 31 last, compared with £160,976,408 at the close of 1943.

The net profit of the bank for the year ended Dec. 31 last, after payment of all charges and after making provision for all bad and doubtful debts and for contingencies, amounted to £1,673,351 11s. 3d., which compares with the figure of £1,584,113 11s. 5d. for 1943. The directors have allocated from the profit £250,000 to contingency account, £250,000 to premises reserve account (for deferred repairs and reinstatement) and £64,767 to the Staff Widows' Fund, towards annuities for war widows. Interim dividends at the same rates as in 1943 were paid on Aug. 8 last. The directors now recommend the payment of final dividends of 5 per cent., making 10 per cent. for the year on the "A" stock, and 7 per cent., making 14 per cent. for the year, on the "B" stock and "C" stock, less income tax in each case.

Both Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and Barclays Bank (Canada) showed good results in their latest reports. These banks, linking the Mother Country with many of the other parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire, place our own bank in a specially favourable position to help international trade. With the liberation of France we look forward to a revival of the business of Barclays Bank (France) Limited.

PREPARING FOR PEACE

Month by month during the past year, the gathering crescendo of military success, bringing with it rising hopes that our enemies in Europe would be well on the way to defeat in the not distant future, imparted a growing sense of urgency to the preparation of plans for meeting the post-war situation. We have been much preoccupied with measures for achieving a state of readiness to meet the future in such a way that the bank shall not be found wanting in any respect in the fulfilment of its appointed task. Our own problems are naturally somewhat different from those of productive industry, but we also must always be able to adapt ourselves rapidly so that we may have ready the kind of services that are wanted and our organisation adjusted to bring them into play.

The need for the small business undertaking to raise medium- or long-term capital, at times a matter of some difficulty before the war, seems likely to be more widely felt with the return of peace, and there is little doubt that the national interest will call for a somewhat broader conception of the place of banking in relation to this need, as well as to the parallel needs of larger concerns. I may say quite categorically that the intention of our own bank is what it has always been in the face of change—namely, to match new wants with new and appropriate services. In the post-war period the wants of small traders will call for careful consideration, for we recognise how necessary it is to help them to re-establish themselves on sound lines.

EXPORT TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Our desperate and protracted struggle has obliged us to use up our resources on a grand scale, quite properly regardless of the future and without counting the cost, and we shall set out upon our journey burdened by a heavy load of indebtedness to countries overseas on account of large purchases for which we have been unable to pay by means of exports. We also seek a higher standard of social security and welfare than ever before. In the light of these considerations our export trade, which has dwindled of necessity under the constricting influence of war, takes on a new and special significance. Our greater dependence upon current effort gives it a high place in the list of priorities, and so we must be ready to produce those goods and services of which other countries stand in need, and be able to provide them at competitive prices, for ultimately it is only thus that we can buy what we need and must have from abroad. The problem, both domestic and international, is, and will remain for some time, how to produce enough to satisfy the most urgent and crying need, but in the process of meeting this markets will be built up and connections re-established. Therefore it is especially important to develop our export trade along sound lines, and with speed, vigour and imagination. We may be sure that competition will develop strongly.

A great deal of preparatory work has been done towards the solution of our problems, and now the time is approaching when its logical successor, action, becomes the order of the day. But so that Government action may bring full success in the difficult phase of transition upon which we hope soon to enter, not only must it be timely and well devised, but it must be attended by another and vital element—the ready co-operation of the ordinary citizen of the country, the man in the street. Social security, a better standard of living and all those advantages that we properly desire, depend upon the industry of every one of us.

QUESTION TIME

IN these times, the question of obtaining a supply of King Six Cigars has become a difficult problem, but these excellent smokes, though scarce, are sometimes obtainable. 1/- each.

eter Richards analyses by-election results since the eneral Election of 1935 to show the necessity of ectoral agreement amongst non-Tory parties if the wing to the Left in this country is to be capitalised. T. Saunders has written an admirable article on niversity Finance, in which he calculates that a rther two million pounds will be required even to aintain pre-war salaries, and that to give an ncrease f 50 per cent. in salaries and provide increased cilities for research a further seven millions are ecessary. Major Frederic Evans contributes an rticle on the re-education of Germany; and there e articles by Leonard Woolf on the United Nations, R. G. Greaves on Public Boards and Henry Smith economic policy.

We regret that, by an oversight, the authorship of *he Little Red Engine Gets a Name* was ascribed to ewitt-Him, who illustrated the book. The author Diana Ross.

The publishers of *Orion* have asked us to say that e first number of this miscellany has been unoidably delayed. It is hoped to bring out the ue towards the end of January, at the price of 6s.

Week-end Competition

No. 781

t by G. B. Mickleburgh

The usual prizes are offered for the best 200-word planation of the situation adumbrated by the llowing recent entry in the personal column of an merican journal:

"A.S.B. Please listen to me, wherever you are. I saw it all; Graham was out of the room at the time and didn't come in until 15 minutes after your mother left. You must believe me.—Matthew."

ntries must reach this office not later than January 30.

ESULT OF COMPETITION No. 778

t by G. W. Stonier

The usual prizes are offered for a poem in rhymed couplets on January. Limit, 20 lines.

eport by G. W. Stonier

January, for most competitors, has meant pearly ies, frosts, an anatomy of trees; others thought st of 'flu and Income-tax returns. Only a very w tried to combine the two, and their efforts were less happy. The level of entries was high, and there is a long list of runners-up: Terence Melican, Elieen Achroyd, Vivien Bulkley, Alexander Scott, Fuessli, Sir Robert Witt, Lilian Oldfield-Davies. The first prize of three guineas is divided between R. J. P. Hewison, Allan M. Laing and Francis King; and half a guinea each go to L. E. J. and Henry Wray.

FIRST PRIZES

At this dead centre, when the sun burns low,
And earth, as doubtful or to stay or go,
Hangs on congealed hinges; when the slight
Scarce visible daily increment of light
Mouse-gnaws the darkness' hem—how stiff the climb
Seems, and unreal, from this trough of time.
The downward path was easy, gently led
By dying Autumn: even when he was dead
The firelit inn of Christmas shone before.
That's all forgotten now, and out at door
The little tree, tilled of its shining fruit,
Too long uprooted, not again takes root:
Snuffed are the pretty candles, quenched the blaze.
How shall we overpass these dregs of days?
Best hibernate, all in a dreamy blur,
Breathing the stuffy prickle of one's own fur . . .
Let but the pale sun shine at four o'clock
A moment—see, the gates of Spring unlock;
Tits forage, tip and run, for pendent fat,
And blackbirds altercate in amorous chat.

R. J. P. HEWISON

Punching life's clock with automatic hand,
Time adds a new month to the endless band;
Where new leaves hide, the moral treasure trover
Now seeks them out and plans to turn them over;
A million diaries in smart new coats
Are pocketing with pride their first-won notes:
Alas, ere January ends, their pride
Will be a memory blank leaves deride!
The coy, reluctant plumber leaves his nest
And turns him east to meet the call of west,
While in a thousand homes by frost drained dry,
A thousand housewives wait to catch his eye;
The tax-collector lurks within his den
Preparing ruin for the sons of men—
A human spider, gloating with bright eyes
O'er struggling holocausts of human flies!
Of frost and thaw the month bears goodly crops:
Up goes the temperature, then swiftly drops,
And 'gainst a background of anæmic snows
The world, disgusted, flaunts a scarlet nose.

ALLAN M. LAING

This is the worst of winter. Now the cattle
Stamp on the water where the ice is brittle.
The air swoons without motion. Or the wind
Whips up a snow as dry and sharp as sand.

Across the fallow see the hunters follow
Their limping quarry. Hear those harsh and hollow
Notes. It is an end of hopes, it is
An end of pity and of kindliness.

And east and west the homeless and tormented
Huddle in multitudes. And the demented
Horsemen ride on, ride on. Above, the stars
Glitter like steely needles on our woes.

And east and west, wherever winter closes
Its shuddering snare, wherever midnight freezes,
The hounds pursue, the hunted flee and die,
Die now, die hopelessly, die endlessly.

Some tumble into holes, and some the hounds
Scatter upon the wind, and some are found
In frozen postures. But the horsemen still
Ride on, ride on. They are insatiable.

FRANCIS KING

SECOND PRIZES

A lone cock-pheasant, lucent in the dawn,
Now struts, now crouches, on my frozen lawn;
Stripped and austere, the trees like fakirs pray,
Lifting ascetic fingers to the day;
And, stark against the blue, the furrowed plough
Draws lines like anger on a War-god's brow.
Stern January! frigid as the tomb,
What warmth of promise lurks within thy womb!
Like to the blood of thine own Saint congealed
Which to the melting touch of Faith doth yield,
So will the sap, now torpid in thy veins,
Take life from April suns, from April rains.
But thou, O patron JANUS, through whose gate
Our battling armies marched to challenge Fate,
Too long hast thou looked both ways, Double-face!
Purge thy god's honour of this black disgrace!
Taught by thy Month, when each cold, secret thing
Shows Winter's face while meditating Spring,
Look singly on us, and for evermore
Bang, bolt and bar the gate that leads to War!

L. E. J.

Those Romans knew a thing or two,
They did not, as we moderns do,
Expect a miracle; no fear!
They did not think that Spring was near
When Winter was but half way through.
They waited till the sun was due
To make their skies Italian blue.
When they made March begin their year
Those Romans knew.

HENRY WRAY

Company Meeting

E. K. COLE, LTD.

THE annual general meeting of E. K. Cole d. was held on Tuesday, January 16, at ton Clinton.

Mr. W. S. VERRELLS (chairman and joint naging director) said that the accounts the year ended September 30, 1944, re- ected substantial progress in the activi- s of the company. The trading profit was 3,124 as compared with £263,401 for the evious year. The net profit amounted to 3,165 before deducting taxation. The ectors recommended a final dividend of 12 cent., making 20 per cent. for the year. There had been no phase of the war, her defensive or offensive, in which radio one form or another had not played a al role. The most intensive effort had en required of the radio industry, and e company, in war as in peace, had played leading part. The full story of how im- tant that had been to the successful secution of the war had yet to be told, t it must already be clear that truly markable radio devices had been used by branches of the Services.

As typical of the wide and varied uses radiolocation and radio-communication ipment could be instanced: The accurate cing of our limited fighter force in the ttle of Britain, as a result of advance diolocation of the enemy's approach; the ordination of searchlights with anti-air- aft guns during the bomber attacks on our es; the part played in Fighter Com- nd's successes during day and night raids; aluable aid in the battle against U-boats widespread use by the Army.

Their radio interests had broadened to er not only broadcast and television re- vers, but also telecommunication and blic address equipment and electronic devices. Their lighting division—including Ensign Lamps Ltd.—had a substantial and encouraging output of electric lamps. Their plastics division was firmly established. The household appliance division, which before the war was making steady headway, would become reinvigorated with the advent of European peace, and the "Special Products" division had been formed to concentrate on the specialised research, development, manufacture and distribution of those products which in the early stages did not lend themselves so readily to mass production methods.

Their research and development division had earned repeated commendations from Ministerial departments for its contribution to the co-ordinated research and development work undertaken by certain sections of the radio industry, co-operating with the Government Research and Development department in the fields of radio-communication and radiolocation, or "radar." Shareholders had good reason to be proud of their company's own "backroom boys."

Realising that in the national interest, for the welfare of industry as a whole, as well as in their own company's interest, post-war export trade must be developed to the utmost, their management intended to devote much of its energy to this end.

This led him to add his views on the question of Government control after the war. In his opinion, the word "control" is used too loosely and in such a manner that the remarkable co-ordination of effort achieved by the Government with particular industries are also labelled "controls."

Neither the radio industry nor any other industry could have achieved the staggering figures of output with such little friction as revealed in the Government's White Paper on Britain's war effort without Governmental co-ordinated planning. I consider that the basic controls over materials and labour should be relinquished gradually, as and when the prior requirements of the nation and liberated Europe become satisfied.

The report was adopted.

Company Meeting

ALLIED BAKERIES

The Annual Meeting of Allied Bakeries Ltd. was held on January 17 in London, Mr. W. Garfield Weston, M.P. (the Chairman), said that in the fifth year under war conditions their trading subsidiaries had maintained their output and sales, but the continuance of the restrictions on ingredients and deliveries had made impossible any great progress.

They had in mind the need to provide for post-war requirements of plant, buildings, etc., and for the extension of activities by provision of new bakeries and had appropriated £50,000 to general reserve, which now stood at £150,000.

The total addition to reserves was £147,455. The total liquid assets at £2,363,987 exceeded current liabilities by £351,748, compared with £356,708 last year.

A splendid contribution had been made through the accounts of the subsidiary companies towards the Insurance and Pension Fund for employees. The welfare of the employees was being well cared for.

The Board was fully alive to the need for scientific progress in their factories and a scheme was in course of preparation with a view to the provision of a first-class laboratory as soon as conditions permitted. Their aim was to augment their present staff with the ablest chemists they could find and to fit out their new laboratory with the most up-to-date scientific and research equipment obtainable, so that it would be among the finest in the baking industry.

The Report was adopted.

My laxative!
Beecham's Pills are always reliable. They are the perfect laxative, and for this reason are trusted by millions. Get some today—and look after yourself!
Beecham's Pills
WORTH A GUINEA A BOX